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THE  
GUARDIAN ANGEL.

A  
POEM IN THREE BOOKS.

BY  
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NEWARK, N. J.

33  
"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"

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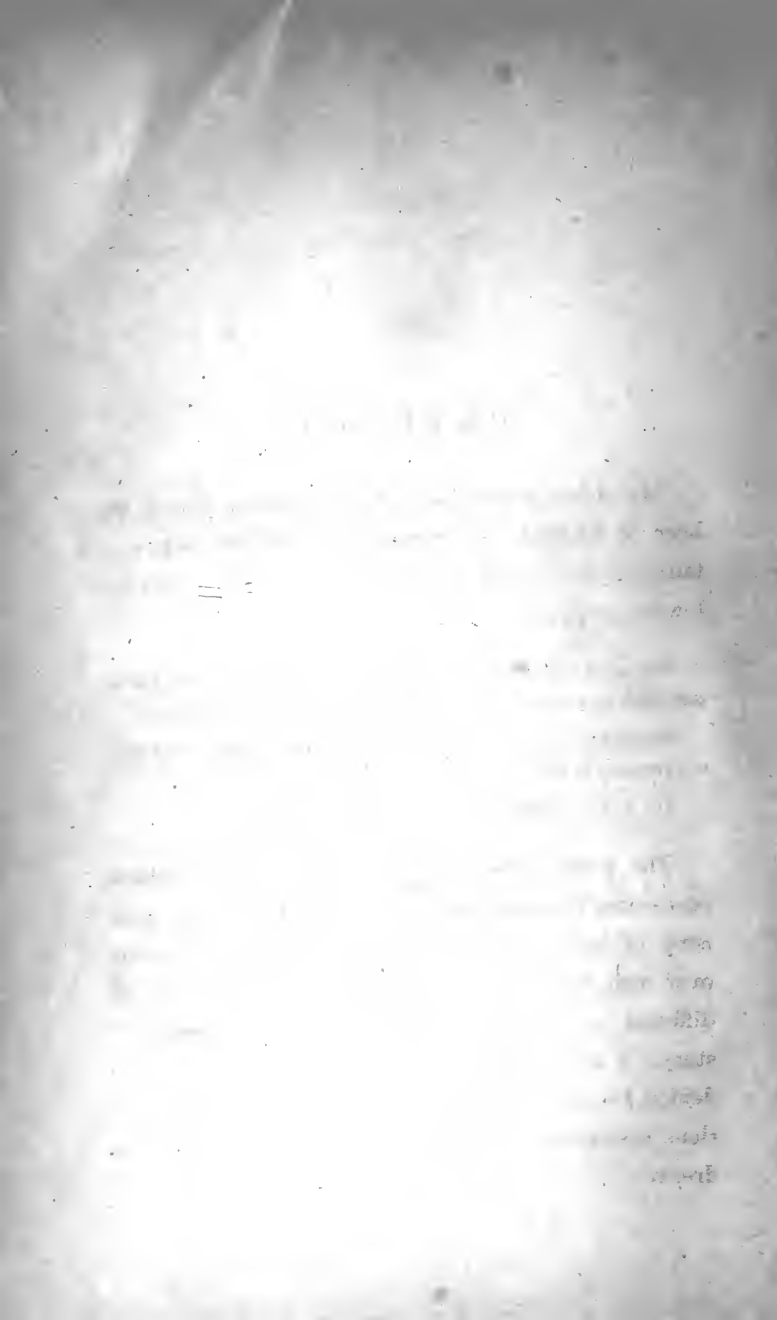
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TO HIS GRACE  
THE DUKE OF ARGYLE:  
THE LORD RECTOR OF MY ALMA MATER:  
AN AUTHOR,  
AND THE FRIEND OF AUTHORS:  
THE BRITISH EDITION  
OF MY POEM OF  
THE GUARDIAN ANGEL,  
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

THE AUTHOR.

NEW YORK, U. S., 1853.



## P R E F A C E.

My object in this poem of the Guardian Angel, has been to illustrate the ministry of the holy angels as taught in the Sacred Scriptures :—especially in the following passages :

HEB. I. 14.—The angels, “ Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation ? ”

PSALM XCI. 11.—“ For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.”

REV. I. 1.—“ He sent, and signified it by his angel.”

The poem consists of a series of conversations concerning the invisible state ; the existence and ministry of holy angels, as well as their guardianship over man, held by persons who met accidentally at different places, connected by a slender thread of story. I have made use of “ the dream ” as a poetic device, keeping in mind that several of the most glorious revelations made to man by God were made in dreams.

From my own experience, I am convinced that the human mind is always pleased with the beautiful and the sublime scenes of the natural world. Who was ever tired by looking at an overflowing fountain or at a waterfall?

As many of the thoughts contained in the poem occupied my mind, while beholding the Ohio and the Mississippi rivers, Niagara Falls, and Calton Hill, Edinburgh, I was led, on subsequent reflection, to make them the grand scenic centres of it. Nor is it possible to give poetic interest to a didactic poem, without episodes on the beautiful and the sublime in the visible universe.

As the spirit of minstrelsy moved me from time to time, thought after thought arose in my mind, and line united mysteriously with line, like the bones in Ezekiel's vision, when God's Spirit breathed on them, until the poem of the Guardian Angel became a living presence of beauty to me, as a creation of my intellect and heart, for I found it in the depths of my own nature; I cannot forget it, nor entertain the thought of blotting it out of existence without painful emotions.

I am met again by another trial: it is the anxiety I feel on determining to unveil the virgin face of my poetic child to the gaze and scrutiny of eyes less partial than my own. Like a father giving away his beloved

daughter at the nuptial altar, who doubts, fears, hopes, and prays for her destiny, I too tremble for the future history of my poem of the Guardian Angel. I have nothing to say concerning the poem as a work of art.

Dear reader, as the traveller who finds some relic of the olden time, intrinsically of little value, among the ruins of an ivy-mantled cathedral, deposits it for preservation in a museum, so do I commit this poem of the Guardian Angel to my generation for safe keeping. If one human mind from its perusal shall obtain clearer, nobler, and more comforting views, concerning the angelic ministry and *God's solicitude* for man, I shall not have written it in vain. In the language of Abraham's prayer for his son Ishmael—"May it live."

J. S.



## P O E M .

THE Poem seeketh to elucidate  
The doctrine of the holy angels, chief  
Their ministry to man.

'Twas but a germ  
Born of the sleepless spirit, a stray thought,  
Which lighted on my soul like some lone bird  
Upon the neighboring tree. Nor can I tell  
How it did take its present form : long years  
It has been growing on my soul, from that  
Sad thought. As years rolled on a presence grew,  
An angel's presence, passing beautiful  
Before my mind, which, neither day nor night,  
I could forget. I loved that presence, aye,  
As loves the lover only. Always the theme  
Of angels pleased me : in childhood's years  
Angelic history charmed me.

Through the years,  
As I elaborated in my inner mind  
The lay of the Guardian Angel, I have gone  
For imagery far and near, to build  
It to its present size. With the urns of thought

Set up, all o'er the rounded universe,  
I took me freedom. Meditation walked  
With me into the works of Nature, where  
The Poet's eye adores the beautiful ;  
And carried me away, where I could hear  
The voices of those unseen presences  
Which minister to the enraptured soul.  
I brought me offerings from every land  
Of thought, as broidery for the lay : nor is't  
Yet worthy of the theme that gave it birth.

E'en as it is, a humble niche my heart  
Would seek for it in the galleries of Earth.  
I cannot blot it out of being now—  
It clingeth to my memory, as moss  
Clings to the old wall, and the elfin flower  
Clings to the ruined shrine : nor bury it  
Without an agony, no more than sire  
His first-born child. It is not vanity  
That leadeth me to send it forth to the world,  
But love inborn. Perchance along the path  
Toilsome and straight, up to the gate of Heaven,  
Some weary wayfarer may find his toils  
Lightened by what it teaches. May it be so !



# THE GUARDIAN ANGEL.

---

## BOOK FIRST.

THE world invisible, the visible  
Surpasses far in population. There  
The spirits of earth's myriads, sleeping dead  
Have habitations, and the hierarchies,  
The ancient settlers of the universe.

Among that multitude of beings, one  
Resplendent as the evening star uprisen  
On the hill tops of earth, shines. Seraphim  
To him are ministering, and at his side  
Conspicuous, bright, his guardian angel stands.  
Whether enthroned, or travelling alone  
Heaven's crystal river down, or holding leagu  
With souls and angels, his great peers, an air  
Of thought invests him, thought serene and grand

And godlike. Spirits whisper, as they gaze,  
And say, what grandeur in his looks ! The thought  
Which fills that noble soul, is not of God  
Alone, and the great hidden mysteries ;  
But also of the earth, the ruined star  
Of man. Nor rosy morn, nor dewy eve  
E'er harness up their chariots, the green earth  
To visit, but he likewise hies him out  
Unto the battlements of bliss, with none  
But his bright Guardian Angel at his side,  
To see the one-mooned world.

Intensely clear  
His memories of earth. His grave is there—  
There was his natal spot, its woods, its wilds,  
Its mountain battlements, its cataracts,  
Its vales, its vasty seas, are garnered up  
In his soul's sacred chambers, like the wealth  
Of palace treasured pictures, fresh and fair,  
As when he dwelt among them. Strong the spell,  
The witchery of youthful love inthrals  
Him still, 'tis part of his soul's being. Souls  
Upborne to sinless habitations, bear  
Their memories with them. Angels, as they mount  
From earth with tidings, halt on their ascent

Beholding him, and tell if aught they know  
Of her, he loved and left a-sorrowing,  
When he upsoared for angel-countries, far  
Beyond the margin of Time's ocean strand.

Dulcet to me his memory is, as tones  
Pealed from cathedral organs, at the close  
Of day. Like the o'ertopping pine, his form  
Was tall, his mien all nobleness and grace.  
The aspect of his countenance as grand  
As carved or painted beauty, rarely seen  
Among the living. Out of his pale face  
Ofttimes a seraph looked. In musing moods,  
And e'en in hours of joyance, he was wont  
To fall a musing, parted stood his lips  
As portals oped for eloquence. But what  
Is beauty in the human face, but lines  
More exquisitely carved, or colors tinct  
On clay, by God's own fingers? Small the worth  
Of outward beauty, for the brilliant tints  
Fade from the living dust. Deep in the mind  
Is beauty shrined, and o'er the universe  
Its hues are poured like light, whene'er the soul  
Is moved to pleasure. 'Tis the spirit unseen

That beautifies the mortal form. The tent,  
Which fire-winged angels lodge in, is lit up  
By their celestial presence, and gleams out  
Illumined, to the midnight traveller.

Thus doth the soul the man irradiate,  
And o'er him hang a veil of lustrous light,  
Betokening what dwells the home within.

Sublime the clusters were of thought divine,  
Which grew upon that soul erewhile on earth,  
As the luxuriant foliage of young oaks.  
At times, methought he teemed with centuries ripe  
With wisdom ; then o'erflowed, as some full urn  
With water, clear and living from the rock ;  
But oftener, like the firmament, when all  
The stars are riding in their chariots brave,  
As angels voyaging, and pouring down  
Their beams in golden glory, on the hills  
And vales of earth ; for aye the beauty clear  
Of his mind filled the universe, and flowed  
Through all its veins. If he but spoke of hill,  
Or tree, or stream, or feeling of the heart ;  
At once a halo of new light arose  
And brooded there. He sowed his thoughts around,

As God sowed erst the teeming worlds, that morn  
Of creation. Once, as if his soul  
Were a vast ocean roused to wrath, where ebb'd  
And flow'd o'erswollen streams of thought, he look'd.  
Ideas grand, colossal, like the towers  
Of ancient worlds, dwelt in his mighty soul.  
At other times, most suddenly across  
His face swept shadows, as if sorrows prey'd  
Upon his heart. Anon his eyes would blaze,  
Like meteors clear and soft and bright, as if  
He heard the voices of young hope and love  
Consoling him, from out their holy shrines.  
He was a mystery to me, and oft  
I feared, when watching his enraptured moods  
Of feeling, that his soul straightway would scale  
Its prison walls. A shell the body is  
Where spirit nestles, nay the globe itself  
Is but a nest, from which innumerable souls  
Their everlasting flight have taken.

Man

Is the Son of God,—His Scion, like to God  
In his diviner nature, but finite.  
On that side view'd all sensuous he seems ;  
On this, all intellect with naught of sense.

From loftier stand his moral nature looms  
Before us, conscience rising like a tower.  
From height sublimer yet, he seems all faith,  
With ear intent on gathering every word,  
Which droppeth from the lips of God. The soul  
Of man is many-sided, of great powers,  
And destiny more grand than angel hath,  
Or being yet create. Sublime is man !

O'er the Atlantic sea, he journeyed far  
At manhood's dawn, far from his island home  
To the western world. In thought ofttime, he  
strayed

A pilgrim homeward, loitered on its strand  
And climbed its heathery hills, for deep enshrined  
In 's heart it lay, where'er he wandered, bright  
And precious as a gem, which love preserves  
Locked in a casket. Of her orators,  
Philosophers and poets much he loved  
To ponder. Caves and glens and mountain tops  
Which gave her martyrs shelter, of old time,  
He knew and treasured. Every battle field  
His memory recalled, and when he told  
Their glories, he revived the patriot dead,

Arrayed the mind before, with coronets crowned  
Of freedom. Full of minstrelsy, as harp,  
Waking to poet's fingers, was his soul.  
And strange his lore, for one so young. The founts  
Philosophy had oped in the vast world  
Of mind, were not concealed from him—of yore  
Nigh these he worshipped. Nor with living seers  
Had not held living converse ; for his isle  
Of deepest, soundest thinkers was the field :  
And he had nursed his generous youth e'en then,  
Where thought profound, and deep, and clear, and  
pure,  
Most reverence hath of men. The poet's tongue,  
The oratorial thunders he had heard,  
The men whose fame surrounds the globe, whose  
tombs  
Votaries fail not to visit ere they die.  
In the vast shrine of worthies, consecrate  
To genius, in his native isle, a niche,  
A vacant niche, there is and yet will be,  
Until his statue fills it and his name.

This faintest sketch by inapt pencil drawn  
May yet suffice, if it shall find a place,

A lodgment in the heart of living men,  
Now on the earth, and to some youth unborn,  
Far down a future age, a study be.  
Among imperishable names may his  
And Isabel's be found—immortal is  
The memory of his guardian angel ; all  
My word-craft seeks is this. Most fit it is  
To sketch the lineaments of him, distinct,  
And full and lifelike, so the mind may see  
His presence, like a thing of life ; for 'tis  
His thoughts, which form the staple of my lay.  
His early history, though all replete  
With substance and adapt for song, I pass  
Untold, nor sound his fortunes, until first  
The star of love on his horizon rose,  
Blessed star to him.

It found him, sure Heaven-sent.

In the bright morn of life, when all the earth  
Is white with blossoms, and the sky  
Of future years is cloudless, only seen  
By lovers. Till that hour he knew not earth  
Had being so divine, so beautiful ;  
So much like those beheld in holy dreams,  
When the entranced soul looks through the sky



Up to the sinless beings there. His hour  
Of love had come, eventful hour of life  
On earth ; the mystic hour, which never comes  
To man but once. He loved ; great is that word,  
And weighty with innumerable memories  
Of joy and hope and sorrow ; meanings which  
No orator hath spoken, and no bard  
Hath sung. A wider, vaster universe  
Was oped to him, and the new shrine of love  
Wooded him to worship—shrine of youthful love  
Shall never lack its numerous worshippers.

Hard by the Mississippi's waters dwelt  
The maid create for him ; for there is not  
In all the realms of being one lone soul  
Unmated, all things are twofold in their lives.  
Spirits are made in pairs, and happiest aye,  
That spirit which hath found its twin-born mate.  
That blessed mate he found for him, foremade,  
In the recesses of the wilderness.  
The solitudes of earth are beautiful,  
Sentient and full of presences divine,  
Investing the earth-born, who dwell therein  
With heavenly bloom and dignity. In such

Was born this angel of his destiny  
And cradled there. Child of the wilderness  
Was she, and grew in beauty, like the morn  
In unseen skies, or flower in secret glen,  
Where no rude eye intrudes. All things most fair  
And holiest in nature, noiseless weave  
Their threads of being. Angels visit earth  
In silence, retreat silent, as the dreams  
Of sleepers. Thought makes pilgrimages wide,  
Silent through universal space ; and light,  
Next swiftest, journeys silent. Trees,  
The huge cathedral trees, which the sweet birds  
At eventide made vocal with their glee,  
Branch, spray, and leaf, and all their odorous blooms,  
Glad of their dewy baptism, silent grow.  
On earth there is no sound when souls are born  
To God. In silence awful and profound,  
Spirits he cleanseth black, engrained in sin.  
The wheel of Providence, so high and vast,  
So laden with the destiny of worlds,  
Rolls ever onward, silent and unheard.  
What wonder then, that child of beauty grew  
To womanhood, amid the wilderness,  
Unconscious, till they met. But when they met,

Each knew his mate, and earth diviner seemed  
To both, and life more holy from that hour.  
Each blossom has its destiny ; she was  
The only flower of time, which grew on earth  
For him.

Words are the lifeless images  
Of outward things ; the history of love  
They never can unfold, nor faithful paint  
The witchery of beauty. Pictured words  
Breathe not, nor live. A sorcery there is,  
A sorcery in love and loveliness,  
Which none may know, save they who feel their  
power.

By day and night, aye, in the lover's mind,  
Absent or present, dwells her image. Life  
No pleasure has, so sweet as waking dreams  
Of love. The most puissant mystery  
Of earth it is, that youthful souls sublime,  
With every virtue crowned, should instantly  
Halt, on the road of life and bow the knee  
To other human souls, once seen, nor seen,  
Nor heard of, till that hour. The woods among  
He saw her first, most beautiful to him  
In her wild youth—his inmost soul awoke

To feeling and to joy, such as before  
Naught had awakened in't.

The trees are fair

At summertide, when sultry days serene  
Lie motionless on earth and sea and sky.  
The light is passing fair, when after night  
Of pain, the sunbeams gild the weary couch.  
Fair laughs the earth, when the black storm is past,  
And the loud flapping of its wings no more  
Resound. The hills are beautiful at night,  
When all the burning stars do stand agaze  
From altitudes cerulean and vast :  
But all this beauty only is, to die.  
Trees, light, earth, storm, hills, stars, insentient all,  
Must perish. Not so human beauty, seen  
By eyes of love. Decay comes never nigh  
“With its effacing fingers”—death itself  
Mars not its memory ; and such was hers  
To him, who loved her. She the beam of light  
Created to illumine the darkened shrine  
Of his existence. Earth must have her moon,  
To light her through the pathless fields of air,  
And man his star to light him up to Heaven.

The Mississippi is the central stream  
Of the vast western continent, in twain  
From the great northern lakes dividing it,  
Down to the balmy Gulf of Mexico.  
On green and terraced bluff, of alpine swell,  
The orient overlooking, to the north,  
Some twice two hundred miles above the mouth  
Of the Missouri, was the childhood's home  
Of Isabelle the fair.

He floated down

The Mississippi, in his bark canoe,  
One star-lit autumn eve ; a lamp shone out  
High up the western banks, which stirred his soul,  
As if a spirit spake, with memories  
Of other lands. Perchance he musing heard  
His ministering angel's voice, for God  
To every man his angel gives, who ne'er  
Leaves him alone. Soon, on the river's banks  
He stood ; then to a willow half submerged  
Moored his canoe, and clombed the winding way  
Up to the lighted mansion ; entering it ;  
No more aimless to roam on earth ; for there  
He found his father's friend, a patriot  
Self exiled from fair France ; and here his fate

Found him, which gave sublimity and bliss  
To all his after life. Young Isabelle  
Became his heart's sole star. In all his dreams  
He saw her, and in every reverie  
He talked with her. His mystery of life  
Was there—he loved, he won fair Isabelle.

Three summers since, in flowery month o' May,  
His home by the Atlantic sea, where aye aside,  
From pilgrimages through the land, he turned,  
Farewell he bade, nor e'er again saw it.  
The day of his espousals hastened on,  
Filling the future, like a jubilee ;  
And through the chambers of his soul, the sounds  
Of its approaching wheels resounded. On  
That morn his friend—the bard, whose numbers seek  
To waft his history far down the stream  
Of years, his sole companion was.

The bay

Studded with argosies, on commerce bent :  
The vast metropolis, all hushed and still  
As a sepulchral world, though sleepers dreamed,  
And sick and dying in their agonies  
Breathed heavy ; with white vapors covered were.

It seemed as if the robes of morning trailed  
On earth. We left the city ere the beams  
Of day perched on the towers like birds of heaven.  
The streets were all deserted, and the steps  
Of wassailers were not e'en heard. None stirred,  
Save traveller all intent on pilgrimage.

All day, all night we hasted on our way ;  
And as the second morn came out of heaven  
Greeting the earth, the Alleghanies stood  
Before us, wrapped in mist, like seers,  
All veiled and hid from vulgar eyes. Anon,  
As day drew near, their lofty summits shone  
Like the golden battlements of far off worlds.  
The live-long day these mountain barriers  
We clomb ; nor saw we aught in gorge, or glen,  
Or waterfall, or precipice, so fit  
For meditation as the giant trees,  
Innumerable, lying in lone dignity,  
Dead monarchs. Side by side they stately lay  
In rows, like tombed corpses in the crypt  
Of hoar cathedrals. It was sad to think  
No resurrection morn would them invest  
With life and foliage.

## Sailing adown

The broad Ohio, us the fourth day found.  
Serene it was, and beautiful that day—  
As beautiful as when who saw it first  
Named it “la Belle Rivière,”—the river showed.  
Its banks, its forests, and its ample vales  
All green with life and populous with herds,  
Embosomed in the circling hills, come back,  
Full oft in dreams to me, far distant. High,  
Remote, the azure, dome-like sky appeared ;  
Illumed and glorious with the summer sun,  
Where islands of white clouds slow floated through,  
Like fleets of hierarchs pleasure voyaging.  
The winds lay sleeping on the far off peaks  
Of mountains dimly seen. Silence profound,  
Like some great presence, listening amid  
The fane of Nature, stood invisible.  
Thrice day sun-lit, and thrice the starry night,  
The white moon walking midst the golden stars,  
Like inmate of the sky gone forth alone  
To meditate, did wax and wane while thus  
We sailed. Nor once a shadow fell on us,  
O’er which the soul could brood as ominous.  
Not fairer may the heaven of heavens appear,



When sinless angels walk its holy streets,  
Of God communing.

Needs must I pass by  
Unsung, the sounding rivers, which came forth  
To greet us on our journey. Urns of thought  
I leave, thick standing there untouched ; of eld  
Lit up by spirits of the wilderness,  
And consecrated unto minstrelsy,  
While earth's young harp was green. O scenes on  
scenes,  
Fresher than youthful memories and fair  
As the tall tree of life, I pass ye by  
With grief.

Absorbed, I gazing watched the eve  
Of the eighth day, silent, the western gate  
Of the horizon ope. The blazing sun  
Had disappeared amid the forest. Sky,  
Earth, woods, and river instantly were dyed  
In crimson glory. On my soul, thoughts strange  
And new came flocking, like the birds of day  
Into the leafy groves, purpling the scene  
With angel presences most beautiful.  
Enough is told, my revery broke off—  
For then a hand me touched—an earnest tongue

Whispered—"The Mississippi," and was mute.

It was my friend—though looking towards the West,  
Mine eye had not observed where they two met—  
The sire of waters and his lovely bride.  
But now I saw the Mississippi sweep  
Silent and strong towards the sunny South,  
Bending the thousand-miled Ohio, like  
An osier twig, and carrying it away,  
As ancient conqueror his captive queen,  
Bound to his chariot. As the stream of time,  
With all its myriad wrecks of bygone worlds,  
Is poured into Eternity's vast sea  
And ceases, so Ohio was not—here  
Her history endeth.

In the purple West,  
Beyond the Mississippi's swollen flood,  
Missouri's shores, with long drawn ranks arrayed  
Of giant sentinels, in verdure clad,  
Lay sleeping in the slant and misty lights  
Filling the forest-gaps, its source unseen.  
Far to the westward set the golden sun,  
While builded by his magic, in the East,  
High overhead the sevenfold arch uprose

In iridescent lustre, beautiful,  
Bridging the azure with its curve sublime ;  
As if ten thousand cars might roll across,  
Freighted with angels, nor its span depress.  
Beneath o'erthwarted by that glory, rolled  
In the soft light Ohio's lovely stream :  
While southward, underneath, not distant far,  
I saw the Mississippi sweeping by,  
As sometime through an arch of olden time  
Triumphal, in the sweet Italian night,  
The traveller sees the slow procession pass  
Of southern constellations burning clear.  
That scene is graven on my soul. The floods,  
The crimson halo, the o'erarching bow,  
Stand aye before mine eyes in present light,  
Upcalled by memory's retrospective spell,  
And with themselves upcalling all the train  
Of thoughts which passed before me musing then.  
How wonderful must be the sinless world  
Around the great white throne ; how more than  
grand  
The soul of God, when all that I beheld  
Was naught, beside His glory unrevealed  
To mortals ; and how unconceived the bliss

Of holiest angels conversant with scenes  
Fairer than this, through all the years of time.

My friend had stood impatient as I gazed  
In tranced silence. When at length he spake  
Abrupt, I started ; for his sudden speech  
Seemed purposeless ; his words at random thrown,  
Wide from the mark.—“ Dost thou believe,” he said,  
“ Dreams are of God to us, as erst they were  
To the old patriarchs who in Haran dwelt ;  
Of import real, inspiration true ;  
Or things as unsubstantial as yon bow  
Built out of rain and sunbeams ? ”

To him thus  
I answered. “ Dreams are twofold in their kind ;  
Some issuing from the soul like streamlets clear  
From the deep hills ; or lights from out the urns  
Of Time ; or trees umbrageous, green and tall,  
Born of the valley. In the mystery  
Of the soul’s essence deep their causes lie,  
Their origin beyond all mortal ken  
Far hidden. Some but fleeting vagaries  
Fantastic by the senses formed, which rise  
Like vapors from the stagnant pool, when high

The sun uprisen scatters his warm rays  
O'er fen and upland. Others again  
There are, which pass the mind's broad disc, as  
fleets

Pass o'er the circle of the optic glass,  
Far out at sea, by angels builded on  
The banks of their great heavenly river, dreams  
Magnificent as orient palaces—  
Life dramas all, all launched by angels too,  
And steered unseen, in silence, swift as light,  
Before the sleeping senses.

“ Dreams there are,  
There have been, and shall be, whose sweep is vast,  
Far reaching in the infinite, deep concealed.  
In these 'tis thought by many that the soul  
Makes visits to far distant worlds, while sleep  
Locks all the body's senses up, and ere  
The gates are oped returns again. Such thought  
Is grand, befitting the large dignity  
Of the angelic soul. Its angel goes,  
Its guardian angel with it goes, in these  
Vast pilgrimages. Far away a land  
There is, where aye the future and the past  
Are seen, called Dreamland—there it goes. The soul

For briefest instant standing on those hills,  
Or travelling through those vales hath memories  
Innumerable traced on it, which rise  
Like scenery before it in its walks  
Anon and musings on the earth. Such dreams  
Are revelations taken from the urn  
Beneath the everlasting throne."

To this

He said—"I had a vision this last night,  
In which I saw the scenery we now see ;  
Only the setting sun, the earth, and sky,  
Were more divinely glorious. Other things  
Were shown to me, not now beheld, which gave  
The dream mysterious interest to my soul.  
I dreamed that I was travelling alone  
I' the land of visions ; now, on mountain tops  
I stood, where I beheld the battlements  
Of Heaven, and heard distinct the music rise  
And fall, like ocean billows on the ears  
Of pilgrim travelling near its surgy roar ;—  
Then, seemed to walk through valleys white with  
tents  
Of seraphim ; where aye at every turn  
I met their heavenly inmates ; and they made

Obeisance. Then, again, it seemed as if  
I paused amid a wilderness, and gazed  
On cataracts of alpine grandeur. Aye  
I felt myself borne on through varying scenes,  
Like an unbodied soul.

“ As wayfarer,  
When passing through an earthly palace, halts  
Sudden before some gallery’s vaulted door,  
Awed by the presences seen there, along  
The canvassed walls and in the niches ; so  
Paused I amid the dream, entranced and awed  
By the grand scene before me :—’twas this scene  
Now spread before us, but more beautiful,  
With something of the invisible world beside,  
As now the West like a pavilion glowed,  
Pitched for the great archangel. As I gazed,  
Methought I heard at intervals, far up  
Amid the gorges of the crimson clouds,  
The voices of young earth-born travellers  
To travellers shouting higher up ; and felt  
The presences of spirits ministering  
Unto me—nay, the spirit hand of one  
Thrilled me.

“ But here a change came over me,

And all that memory has preserved is this :  
I sat alone in a canoe, borne down  
The current of the broad Ohio. Mute  
As rivers in the realms of death, was all  
Above, around ; naught heard I, but my thoughts  
Fast rushing through the halls of mine own soul.  
Most suddenly a rainbow noiseless dropped  
On earth from out the firmament ; a grand,  
Aerial structure beautiful uphung,  
Like the angelic bridges o'er the sea  
Of life—an arch of clear and gorgeous light,  
It spanned the Ohio river. Downward still  
Borne on, I neared it, and I saw distinct  
An angel stand midway its vaporous curve ;  
A giant angel ; on his head a crown  
Of wondrous glory gleamed ; afar  
Behind him trailed his robe ; and o'er the arch  
Floating, was stirred by the night-wind. Anon,  
I thought the angel beckoned me and spake,  
But incomplete ; as dreams forever are.  
His words mine ear caught not. Perchance the  
waves  
That plashed around my course, likelier yet,  
My mortal ears, by sin sealed to the tones



Of holy angel's voice, those words divine  
From mine enraptured soul shut out. Anon,  
In fearful effort those angelic words  
Striving to grasp, I started, I awoke."  
"How hard," he said, "thus frustrate to awake  
And ineffectual, when a moment's space  
Spared to the vision more, had given to him  
The words seraphic."

"Sorrow not," I said  
To him, "for certes, soon again will come  
That messenger, if aught the message be, as ships  
By sudden storm blown from the shores they coast,  
Out to broad ocean, after many days  
Arriving safe when winds are down ; so dreams  
Pass and come back again ; nor doubt I, this  
Shall bring the guardian spirit again, who left  
His errand half unfinished."

Here I paused,  
For up the Mississippi now had turned  
Our vessel. Mute, upon the rushing prow,  
The crew stood gazing at the vasty flood,  
Which seethed and muttered hurrying past, as  
though  
Instinct with some great life. Innumerable

Were the images which came before my mind  
By which to measure it—this most we took,  
A maniac prophet fleeing from the face  
Of God, seeking some unknown world. The gates  
Of day down-dropped, and all now visible  
Of that most gorgeous sunset, was a gleam  
Of golden light above the distant tops  
Of the dim forest trees, like to the trail  
Of angels on their road to Heaven.

The chariots of the night arrived on Earth,  
Bearing the round white moon and silver stars  
Their riders. On the horizon, from her car  
Of glory landed that fair queen, and poured  
Celestial radiance from her heavenly urn,  
O'er forest, flood, and field. Her aspect looked  
As that of heavenly priestess, at the shrine  
Of nature. The tall forest trees appeared,  
Like Druids stationed in the wilderness  
To worship God. The firmament of blue,  
When the enkindled stars sat on their thrones,  
Showed like a city on a mountain's steep,  
Seen by the traveller from the vale below  
At night, with all its avenues and squares

And monuments illumed. What sight of Earth  
Could be more gorgeous than a night like this ?

A passing cloud, a vagrant of the sky,  
An instant hid the moon, and o'er the scene  
A long, blue shadow flung. At this my friend  
Bespoke mine ear and said, " 'Twere well to sit  
Us down ; the place—the hour—the memories  
Recalled are fit for high discourse."

Anear the prow

We sat us down, where observation swept  
Far up the Mississippi. Still the cloud  
Threw its dim drapery over all the scene.  
Alone we sat, nor long in silence sat ;  
For albeit soon,—“ I doubt not, I indeed,  
That dreams are given of God, and give, themselves,  
Enlargement to the wide domain of thought.  
Still why it thus should be, or whence the need,  
I see less clear. Man's sensuous essence fits  
His nature to converse with all the world,  
Yet more his puissant mind. The Holy Ghost  
And Revelation's truth pour on his soul  
All light essential else. Perchance the dream  
Is the soul's Eden-birthright, still possessed

By it. If dreams were needful, then, to man,  
More needful in his exile."

Answering him—

In thought I led him back to the primal morn  
Of Earth, and to man's fall. "The Earth," I said,  
"When man was made, was nearer God than now.  
It lay at anchor in the bay of Heaven,  
As new rigged ship, moored in an inland sea  
Of Earth. The shadow of the battlements  
Of the vast sinless land fell over it—  
This silver orb of time. From its green hills  
The great white throne and mystic bow were seen ;  
Heard, too, the minstrelsy at morn and eve,  
Of harping angels. Numberless amid  
The groves of Paradise walked cherubim  
And tongues and peoples. All obeisance made  
To man whene'er they met him. If desire  
Of travel e'er had then possessed the mind  
Of man, he could have passed unwrecked and safe  
In frailest shallop through the channels there,  
And seas replete with worlds ; as earthly bays  
Are with fair isles. In nightly dreams man saw  
Worlds now unknown, and visions had of things  
Future and grand.

“ Change direful came o’er man  
And earth, apostate. Angels then, sent down  
In haste towed off the erring Earth, far off,  
Into the wilds of space, where far and few  
The stars are visible by night ; by day  
One lonely sun. Like plague-ship on a rock,  
A desert rock fast anchored, it was left :  
God’s interdict waved like a banner high  
Above its rocky battlements ; and round  
Its sea-girt shores angelic beings walked  
Forbidding travel there, from sinless worlds ;  
Save to God’s special envoys.

“ Forfeiture

Most sad was this to man, apostate man.  
Angels no more might with him parley hold :  
No more be seen by, save when sent down  
From Heaven, on special errand from the throne.  
No more might angel footprints mark the earth ;  
No more might sinless minstrelsy the ear  
Of man regale : no more might angel tents  
Be visible to man : no more the wings  
Of his own soul unfurl, and from the Earth  
Go out exploring other stars. Egress  
From Earth to man was barred, forever barred,

Save by the mystic spirit-ship of death.  
Of all his former state, naught was there left,  
Naught but the privilege of dreams divine ;  
Which, haply, if collected from a life,  
And in one tome, apart, enshrined,  
Were almost revelation."

Here, paused I :

The vessel veered, and the unclouded moon  
Disclosed four listeners sitting, of our words  
Observant—these unseen erewhile. A boy  
Fairhaired was one, an orphan, in one day  
Bereft of both, when most he missed their care,  
His parents—while the summer's raging star  
Smote the red rivers of that deadly clime  
With pestilential flame. When both were gone,  
Another boy, scarce older, clung to him  
Of sable hue, a slave. Around the child  
His arm was folded ; on his faithful breast  
The orphan head was pillowed. I have seen,  
Oft in my dreams, since that eventful night,  
The orphan and his slave. Even then, methought,  
That servile forehead did contain a soul  
Not servile.

Four in number there they sat

The listeners :—one a venerable man  
Tall and white haired, with patriarchal flow  
Of reverend locks : and as the moonbeams fell  
In floods of lustrous glory o'er his face,  
As if from quenchless urn outpoured, I felt  
The oratory of his eye. He sat  
One side of the orphan boy.

Upon the right  
Of the boy-slave reclined a woman, old  
Exceedingly, in robes of widowhood.  
Her large blue eyes shone radiant with the light  
Of deathless thought ; her feature clear and fair  
As sculpture. Spirit of statuary ! where  
Was then thy chisel, that thou didst not give  
That group to future times !

Amid the pause,  
The woman's words fell on mine ear distinct :  
“ Seeing of dreams you speak,” she said, “ and  
things  
Spiritual and divine, no wrong it were,  
I ween, to hear and question. Pardon me,  
If I offend, who would not ; but your words  
Have touched my heart, that I must speak ; for  
naught

Doubt I, but angels stoop, at times, to hear ;  
And spiritual beings hold their watch,  
In ministering to the exiled souls of earth,  
Inspiring dreams, which future deeds may oft  
Foreshadow, and teach truths of life divine."

Albert her words drank in, into the depths  
Of his large soul. He bent him forward, while  
She spoke. The Ethiop and the orphan looked  
Inquiringly into her face, with eyes  
Like stars of love, at eve, before the moon  
Arises ; and a curious witchery  
Crept over me at every word she said.  
Nor can I tell why it were so, unless  
The music of her voice some chord awoke  
Of secret sympathy.

At length, assured  
Her words gave no offence, then on she spoke  
What in her mind was upmost ; how her Lord  
When he was dying, on his painful bed,  
When life was well nigh ended, and perchance  
A something of the future dawn was nigh,  
Dreamed, and, what time he woke, divulged his  
dream,



Mystic and wonderful.

“ In thought absorbed,  
Beside his couch by night I sat, alone.  
He slept ; when sudden up he rose, awake,  
Like one who dreams, when touched by human  
hand.”

Thus prefaced she the story of his dream.

“ ‘ Saw ye mine angel, or his footsteps heard  
Near by ?—the sound of wings, of angel wings,  
Has waked me from a vision. Still, I hear  
The whisper of angelic messengers,  
As if they ministered to me, in sleep.  
Audience methought an angel sought of me.  
He looked some far-off traveller, oft-times seen  
On hill of earth, at early morn, whose robe  
Of mist trails far behind. I instant knew,  
And felt it was a spirit of glory, sent  
On secret errand from the throne of God.  
The angel had the visage of a man ;  
But taller than a mortal form his mien.  
The crown upon his head was not of earth,  
The harp not earthly, which his left hand bore.  
But ere his utterance reached my wondering ear,  
I heard the footsteps of my fluttering thoughts

Descending and ascending through my soul,  
Like echoes of a falling tree.

Ere long,  
Smiling ineffable peace, the angel spoke.  
Elect one, peace, fear not, thy servitor  
Ordained am I of old, thine angel guide,  
In the Lamb's book thy name is writ :  
Writ in God's autograph, ere angels yet  
Had being, or the compasses of God  
Had mapped the confines of the universe.  
Hoary Eternity thy name elect  
Holds graven on its everlasting walls.  
The dial, which all things predestinate  
Announces, points even now to thy death-hour.  
He, who for sinners with the Father pleads—  
The advocate—closes his argument  
For thee. Complete in holiness thy soul.  
For thee the Holy Spirit brooding sits,  
A mystery in a temple ; and well pleased  
The Father. Lifted by the hand divine  
Of thy great proxy, hath the fragrance sweet,  
From the full censer of thy prayers, gone up,  
Blent with the increase of his sacrifice,  
Unto the Father's nostrils, high in heaven.

A crown, a harp of holiest make, a throne  
Await thy entrance to the land of souls.  
Hearest thou that sound?—It is the pendulum  
Of ancient time, its oscillations slow  
Beating. Thou canst not hear it, mortal yet  
Imperfect—nor canst see the mystic thread  
Uniting thee to all the holy forms  
Enthroned and glorified. It vibrates fast,  
As they on tiptoe watch thy advent grand  
Into their realms. Soon shalt thou see the court  
Of courts, sublime beyond all pomp of earth.  
On earth great multitudes of angels stand,  
Awaiting thy departure from the shores  
Of time. No soul elect from earth departs  
In the death-ship alone, or through the vale  
Of terror walks, without great retinue,  
Surpassing princely coronation trains.  
What would the sinless hierarchies of God  
Declare, if they beheld one holy soul  
Of angel guides bereft, in that dark hour  
Of strange transition, walking lonely home,  
To its new dwelling in eternity? ’

“No more said he, but with outspreading wings

Of wondrous beauty, sailed away and soared,  
As eagle from a sea o'erhanging cliff,  
Into the empyrean. In the dream  
I followed him, as I were winged too.  
The moon we passed, and many a star, when night,  
The night of earth had sat enthroned in pomp  
Surpassing day. We passed the wheel-like sun,  
As he lit up the far horizon's steep  
With rays. We saw the battlements sublime  
Of the vast universe, unseen before.  
Huge amphitheatre-like cliffs, which gird  
An archipelago with isles besprent.  
Dense crowded on these ramparts of clear light,  
Rank above rank, sworded and helmed with fire,  
Thicker than cedars on the holy hill  
Of Lebanon, angelic legions stood.  
On, on we flew, the headlands we passed by,  
Creation's utmost limit, and went out  
Beyond the worlds, beyond the spheres of time,  
Into the airless waste of barren space,  
And there, hung balanced in the breathless void,  
Gazing, a desolation limitless  
On all sides round us.

“ Then the angel spoke

‘Earthborn,’ he said, ‘behold the ship of death  
Riding the billows of eternity,  
With her great freight of souls.’

“ I looked abroad

And saw a huge cathedral craft, her hulk  
All stripped, withouten masts, withouten sails,  
In silence toiling through the pitchy gloom.  
At times, strange wailings from her ribs of woe  
Rose tremulous to the ear, at times arose  
Jubilant shouts of triumph.

“ Here the dream

Was changed. Methought a child I was, alone  
On earth. ’Twas summer, beautiful to see  
Were the white blossoms on the hedgerow trees  
By the woodside. - Balmy the air and blue  
The sky serene, with here and there a mass  
Of clouds whiter than hills of snow. The road  
I took was mountainous, and rich in wealth  
Of glens and streams, and woods and waterfalls,  
And lakelets forest-girt. Anon, a group  
Appeared of angels coming down the way,  
Who formed an avenue through which to pass  
Onward and upward. Silent all they stood,  
And made obeisance my steps before,

As the steep road I clomb with childish glee  
Alone. Nor long until another group  
Drew nigh, and formed themselves in rows, and  
stood

On either side ; like sentinels they stood,  
While I fared forward. More and more they came,  
The angel travellers, thickening on the way.  
The mountain road up to its highest gorge,  
Cleft through the hills eternal, narrower grew,  
And steeper. Nor could I forbear the thought  
That I was near the land of angels, near  
Some city, whence their hosts forth issuing came.  
Still went I on, until I reached at last  
What seemed the summit of that Alpine road,  
And paused awhile to look around, and drink  
Into my heart the scenery sublime.

Then what a wonder blazed upon my soul  
Astonished !—all the mountain gorge below,  
Which weary I had thriddled to this height,  
Stood solid with one countless, shining mass  
Of angels coming up. Host after host  
They came. Above, great patriarchal trees  
O'er all the boundless champaign flourished fair,  
Upon the blessed mountain's top. The road

Through this wide meadow lawn showed great array  
With gonfanons, and banners, sounds of harps  
And symphony of psalteries and song,  
Approaching.—First, my Guardian Angel came.  
Joyful he grasped my hand, and in my ear  
This secret whispered.”

Here, she stopped and wept.  
With choking voice, scarce audible, so stirred  
With grief, then added—“ Death was waiting, nor  
Would wait one moment longer. Ere he told  
That mystery sublime, the other world  
Received his soul, and I was there alone,  
Alone beside my dead.”

The orphan boy  
No longer could his agony of soul  
Contain ; but loudly on his mother called,  
Like some lorn child, when wandered from its home  
And stopped by passing stranger. To his heart  
Closer the Ethiop clasped the boy—his tears  
Wiped off, and with kind words assuaged his woe.  
To change his trains of thought to channels free  
From sorrow, quietly I took his hand  
In mine, and asked if he had ever dreamed  
Of angels ? Instantly his eyes shone out

Like meteors bright and beautiful and full  
Of joyful thought, and answering, well pleased  
To tell his thoughts, spoke thus in childish phrase.

“The night dear mother died, from troubled dream  
They waked me. In the dream I thought one came  
To me and talked about my mother. Wings  
Had he, like albatross or eagle, such  
As I have seen upon the rocky cliffs  
Of ocean, in the distant land beloved,  
Home of my boyhood.—Pointing to the sea,  
He showed me where a galley rode the waves  
Steered by angelic hands—‘That bark,’ he said,  
‘Bears thy dear mother’s sainted soul away  
Beyond the shores of time.’—I cried for her  
To take me with her, and awoke to find  
Her dying.

“Pallid was her face, and bright  
With an unearthly light her eyes. Her hands  
Were very cold, I feel their coldness still  
Upon my forehead ; and the words she spoke  
To me, forever shall I hear, as though  
They could not fly away from earth and me.  
With grief o’ercome I soon again returned



Into the land of dreams. I seemed at home  
And in my little chamber, on my couch  
At midnight. Through the window I could see  
A little star a-twinkling in the sky  
Brightly. The young moon looked upon the star  
As if she loved it more than other stars  
Around it. Soon I thought I saw that star  
Come nearer and more near to me. It looked  
In at the window, and I thought I called  
To it, and said, O little twinkling star,  
Come in. At this methought the star was changed  
Into a bird, and instantly began  
To sing more sweet than any little bird  
I ever heard amid the grove. When once  
The serenade was o'er, I thought it flew  
Into my room, and oh how beautiful  
It was. It turned into an angel, like  
My mother, and then hovered o'er my couch,  
Still growing liker and more like, until  
It was my own dear mother. Beautiful  
Her wings and mantle seemed. More close she  
drew  
And stood beside my bed, and fondly looked  
Into my face, and spread her pinions bright

Around me, and soft whispered in mine ear—  
I tried to hear, but woke in trying.”

Then

He wept aloud, at thinking how he woke  
His mother’s words unheard.

“ Good messengers

Are ever on the wing, between the earth  
And highest heaven,” the old man said, and bent  
Him forward to embrace the orphan boy.  
This, too, he added—“ Nor is it a thing  
Incredible, fair boy, thy mother’s soul  
To thee was ministering amid the dream.  
Faster than thought can travel, travelleth  
The disembodied soul from earth to heaven ;  
And from the spirit realms again to earth.  
Most fit it were she should revisit thee,  
What time her duties at the great white throne  
Gave leisure.”

Now ’twas near the noon of night,  
For fast the moonlight hours had floated by  
Amid the reminiscences of dreams  
Foreshadowing the future—the unknown.  
As shining day and dusky night both met  
I’ the vale, so looked the orphan and his slave,

While they arose and stood—as light and shade  
Moving across the summer plain, so, they  
Before us, sobbing.

“Sorrow not,” I said,  
“Ye orphans, for most fitting night is this,  
For souls translated to eternity  
Earth to revisit, and most fit for dreams  
Dewy with inspiration.”

From his seat  
The aged man arose. Tall was his form  
And awe-inspiring, like a seer of earth,  
Whose inner life is full of holiness,  
Keeping communion ever with his God.  
Full in the moonlight standeth he, e’en now,  
For memory never perishes, but keeps  
Her thoughts with miser care, deep in the cells  
Of the fixed soul. As statue on whose brow  
Immortal thoughts are graven, so he stood,  
Then spake these words, solemn as oracles  
Of old revealing mysteries profound ;—  
We listened, I and Albert, for we two  
Alone remained.

“Causes have holiest dreams  
Which dreamers little know. Angels must needs

Be the scene-shifters, for no hand of flesh  
Could build up architecture so divine  
And beautiful ; nor from futurity  
Lead up the shadowy skeletons of things  
To be ; nor ope the gateway of the world,  
Where God's old purposes have lain concealed  
From first eternity. The dreams this night  
Revealed to us have sequels, nor is it  
A thing to question, but soon some kindling ray  
From passing angel's torch, may fall on earth  
And lighten up their meaning.

“ Evermore,

The future and the past appear in dreams,  
Looming like headlands seen far out at sea  
By mariners. Nay, passing strange it is,  
That scenes remote in childhood's years return  
And are reacted ; and that beings which  
No mortal eye hath seen, should sudden rise  
From out the womb of dread eternity,  
And flit before the dreamer. But 'tis so.  
Divine and mystical are dreams, God's gifts  
To erring man, nor given to man alone,  
But e'en to cradled infants, and the years  
Of growing childhood, each to each adapt.

What mother hath not sighed to know the thought  
Which stirred her sleeping infant's soul serene,  
As o'er its face, like twilight o'er the sea,  
Gleamed the sweet smile, and from its lips of love  
Laughter came rippling out, as if its ear  
Heard whispers of angelic voices nigh.  
The closest dungeon, secret as the grave,  
Barreth not out the dream of light, of love,  
Of blessedness, and death alone has power  
To bid the march of nightly visions cease.

All things are God's—all dreams—all waking  
thoughts—

Beings angelic, mortals in their flesh,  
Souls in their immortality, all His,  
And Death and Life, Eternity and Time ;  
This night is His, an episode not lost  
In the great poem of His Providence.  
Oft have I thought that dreams to man are sent,  
To warn the soul of its departure near.  
Nor were it strange, if we should learn anon,  
The ship of death were voyaging hard by  
This very night."

Not silent long remained

Albert, but answered—“ Dream-worlds thick as  
stars

In the blue sky there are, in winter nights,  
Which souls must visit, and strange converse hold  
With spirit-beings, so that passing out  
Of earth into Eternity, some thought  
Of the future may possess them, and make fit  
For higher and diviner mysteries.  
It may be that the dreams, they dreamed alive,  
Borne with them through the narrow gates of death,  
Become deep truths to the unbodied souls,  
Which stand awaiting on the strand of time,  
Like ship unlaunched.

“ Vast is the soul enlarged,  
Vaster than planet, star, or moon, or sun.  
They cannot think—not so the soul. Nay, more,  
They in the lapse of time must cease to shine,  
To traverse the great firmament, no more  
Needed to light the skies—but not the soul ;  
It never can return, nor in the womb  
Of dark oblivion be entombed and hid.  
It must exist forever, whether saved  
Or lost—its essence has no end. The term  
Of its abiding on the earth, the day

Of grace, of overtures, of working here  
Below, must end, all end. Nor endless e'en  
The joy of angels over rescued souls  
New born to bliss. But to the soul itself,  
In itself infinite, no end shall be.  
Death is but sleep's twin brother, nor long time  
Ere all of us shall converse hold with death  
Intimate and familiar, as in sleep  
With our accustomed dreams, which still supply,  
On fit occasions, with fit help the soul.  
These are its towers of observation, these  
Its Pisgah realms, where oft it walks inspired,  
And learns the awful future. Even to me  
Have dreams great warning given of events  
Whose tops no eye hath seen.

One dream I had

Long years ago, or ere my beard had grown,  
Or I had thought to roam beyond the sea.  
Nor change of place, nor change of scenery,  
Nor wildest change of thought has from my mind  
That dream erased. I thought that I was dead,  
And buried in the hills beside a brook,  
Which evermore made music, as it flowed  
Close to my bed, and still methought, I grieved,

In the still grave, with deep regretful pain  
That I had died, or e'er I found to build  
The mighty purpose of my heart. For I,  
I too, a purpose had, through all my youth.  
Touched, if enkindled not, by fire divine,  
"To build the lofty rhyme,"—and strike the harp,  
Which many a stranger hand had struck before :  
The harp of Scotia, which even then gave out  
Sublimest strains, that wondering nations loud  
Applauded. But nor Scott's enchanted lay  
Of way-worn minstrels and beleagured dames,  
And those who wept the flower of Yarrow's stream,  
'All wede away,' and deathless Bannockburn,  
And fatal Flodden ; nor the bard who sang  
'The lost Kilmenie, pure as pure might be ;'  
Nor Motherwell's sad minstrelsy, instinct  
With simple Scottish pathos ; nor his lyre,  
Which sounded the dread plague scene ; nor who  
sang  
The Baltic and the North, and that weird fray,  
Where Munich's banners waved at dead of night,  
Arrayed by torch and trumpet, nor the flow  
'Of Iser rolling rapidly.' My soul  
Detained as higher themes, which gave their sound



To less sonorous strings, and with their flame  
In genius less sublime kindled, for me  
Greater sublimity. His muse who sang  
'The Course of Time,' still warbled in mine ear,  
And lured me with the gesture of white hands,  
Waving me forward—till my heart was filled  
With that sole hope, to build one monument  
Of holy song, which might survive, not "brass  
Nor the famed capital," but this poor clay  
Which gave it birth and being, and ensure  
Something unto his glory ; and that done,  
To lay me down and die—but in my dream  
I died, or ere I reached that only goal  
Of that my one ambition. Nor, perchance,  
Is't wonderful that, since I dreamed that dream,  
I feel as one foredoomed too soon to die,  
My self-allotted task undone, my life  
Purposeless, and my death as bare of fruit  
As my life hath been.

Troubled is my soul  
With this night's history of dreams ; nor yet  
Do I fear to die !—so, if death meets me, ere  
I have achieved my earth scheme, be it mine  
To yield it up to one whose sojourning

On earth exceeds mine own, to finish it."

I answer made : " This night an epoch strange  
Will be, in all our memories. The dreams  
Will haunt us evermore, and fairer make  
Our earth state. Beautiful, more beautiful  
Than erst will be our future. Brighter forms  
Will seem to walk with us along the track  
Of time, and cheer us on our journey home  
To our great Father's halls. 'Tis wonderful,  
That on the mystery of God-sent dreams,  
Such unexpected dazzling light should fall.  
Ascribe not to blind chance such meeting. God  
The sower is, and reaper of the seed,  
And fruitage of all history. Unroll  
The map of nations where we choose, and then  
An armless hand is seen the helm to guide  
Of earth. The starry worlds, heaven's ships of fire,  
Not aimless drift athwart the firmament,  
But voyage on to shores foredoomed to them,  
Since the creation. God our teacher is  
This night upon the Mississippi."

Here

We parted, soft sleep like a mantle fell

Ere long enfolding me, and with the sleep  
Dreams came uncalled. The narrow streets of earth  
Were ne'er more thronged with multitudes, than was  
The sleep of that one night with dreams. Not all  
Can I recall, nor give them utterance.  
Some I remember, angels beautiful  
With all were blent—their faces and their words  
My memory for aye will haunt.

One claims

A passing tribute in my lay : I seemed  
Slowly to climb a high sequestered hill  
Of earth, for in the dream I found myself  
Upborne to verdurous mountain-tops, and stood  
As pilgrim stands, who waits before the gate  
Of some imperial palace, half concealed  
With foliage dense. While thus I stood there came  
A shining angel unto me and said :  
“ Hail, brother, hail ! thrice happy I to see  
Thy face. I heard thou wast upon the earth,  
And from my course have turned to visit thee,  
For ever since creation's cold, gray dawn,  
A pilgrim have I been, wandering alone  
Beyond the frontiers of existence, where  
The pendulum of time I could not hear,

Counting its oscillations, have I gone ;  
Worlds e'en no hierarch yet hath visited ;  
And things beheld, none see till they have dwelt  
Long ages in eternity : yet earth—  
Thy star I never saw till now, nor thee.  
Yet well I know that this is earth, the orb  
Of wondrous destinies. Thee, too, I know.  
Reflected in my memory hath been  
Thy face since first God gave me being, clear  
And beautiful as in the limpid pool,  
The forms o'erhanging it. By angel's hand  
Limned, I saw it in the gallery  
Of God, where hang the pictures of all earth's  
Innumerable generations. Mysteries  
Thou wilt not know, for ages link my fate  
With thine."

As some great thought will sudden flash  
Before the mind, and disappear as fast,  
Ere yet the soul arouses to the sense  
Of its great presence, so this angel came  
And passed away.

He scarce departed, came  
A second angel and saluted me.  
Tall as a fiery column, and as clear

Revealed was he. He bowed again, but not  
To me, and spake. I knew, but knew not how I  
knew—

His words unto my Guardian Angel, near,  
Though all unseen, and unsuspect by me,  
Were spoken ; greeting, such as spirits have,  
They had, not having met since I arose  
On earth, fresh from creation's teeming lap.  
Erewhile together they had journeyed ; seen  
Strange wonders in the distant universe,  
Not oft explored by angels ; embassies  
Of mighty import had fulfilled, and dwelt  
Of old together :—this I heard them tell.

Swifter than light that angel on his way  
Passed and was gone. Before me, in my dream,  
Another, mightier, stood. “Thou son of earth,  
Follow,” he said, “and see the things not seen  
By mortal eyes. There is a world not far,  
Like unto earth, but sinless, which e'er since  
The ruin of its sister silent stands  
As if 'twere dead ; as fabled Niobe,  
When grief for her fair children to cold stone  
Transformed, so was that earth all petrified

By sympathy intense, throughout all time,  
Frozen and lifeless. The streams roll no more,  
Nor waters are, but stone. The trees, the flowers,  
The grass—the very dew-drops crystallize  
And harden into rock. The winged winds  
Hang like dead eagles in the air. Its moon,  
Its stars, its sun, all stone. The dwellers there,  
Godlike in form and mien, like statues stand,  
Cold in the shadowy groves—alive within,  
Yet cased in adamantine panoply, for flesh.”  
Much more he said, which dwelt not in my soul  
Distraught and slumbering.

But this remains :

I saw a host of angels sailing by,  
Freighting a barge of fire, round as the moon  
Riding the dark blue sky at noon of night,  
Of winter night, through rocky seeming clouds,  
Snow white. They spoke, and I could hear them  
tell

Of worlds, their ministry, where thoughts sublime  
Lay on their shores, thick as the shells and sands  
On earth's sea-beaten beaches, where unwrought  
The quarries lie of genius infinite.

Here I awoke, nor ever night have passed  
Before or since, dream-haunted thus. The world  
Of spirits stood with gates wide open. How,  
Not so, when I, a mortal undivest of clay,  
Such converse held with beings aeriform ?  
The soul hath warnings given, by day, by night,  
Which fit it for its future.

But the morn  
Had dawned meanwhile, and rising from my couch  
I looked upon the Mississippi flood,  
Seeking its broadest prospect. The grand woods  
Seemed to take root in mists, the hill-tops shone  
Far in the orient, with the crimson light,  
Shot upward from the unseen source of day.  
The sun's broad orb looked o'er the horizon's edge  
Beaming like hope upon a bed of death.  
Down flowed his rays o'er vale and forest green ;  
And in the river's face, as in a glass,  
His perfect orb lay mirrored. All around  
So fair, so tranquil, so serene, that earth  
Appeared a holy suburb of the sky,  
Fit lodging for the blest.

My reverie

The slave-boy broke :—all wild with agony

He seized my hand and cried : “ The orphan boy  
Is dying,” nor more said, but ran, but flew  
From out my presence.

True it was, the boy,  
The orphan boy was dying. Pestilence  
Had breathed upon him as it passed. His face  
Was sunken with a tinge of livid blue,  
Like the dark azure of the mighty Rhone,  
When the cold moon lights up its waters. Cold  
And clammy was his little hand, nor pulse  
Was in’t. His eyes shone with unearthly light,  
Yet on the haggard features played a smile,  
As, with a husky voice, “ I know,” he said,  
“ That I am dying, mother told me so.  
Last night I dreamed she had me by the hand,  
Beside clear waters, where we sat us down  
And long communed. She told me she was now  
An angel, and with other angels lived  
I’ the heavens. Soon, my, father too was there ;  
But changed from what he was. Yet still I knew  
His figure coming, but the while I rose  
To meet him, a great spirit filled the place  
With his appearance, and it said, ‘ Not now,  
To-morrow.’ Instantly I woke,—the morn



Is come—to-morrow—happy I to die—  
Happy ! ”

Brief was his death-pang. As a prayer  
Was offering for his soul, I saw his lips  
Cease moving, in default of farther strength  
For utterance, and his fringed eyelids fell  
Down o’er his eyes. Oh, could I but have seen  
His disembodied soul, when it beheld  
The retinue of angels waiting there  
To bear it up to glory, and relate  
The marvellous raptures of that hour of change,  
Immortal then would be my numbers.

The ritual of burial, nor long  
The eulogy by that gray-headed sage  
Pronounced :—

“ The grave is full of hands which toiled ;  
Of tongues which uttered words that cannot die ;  
Of ears to softest music tuned ; of hearts  
All hallowed as the shrine of love ; of heads  
Garnered with wisdom ; feet which o’er the roads,  
The weary roads of earth have walked long years ;  
Of faces beautiful as angels ; now  
Another trophy hath it won ; nor hath

In its dark halls been hid more sacred dust  
Than this we leave alone ; nor all alone,  
For aye near this, amid the pathless woods,  
Angels shall vigil keep. Nor can we doubt  
His soul could now be seen, if it were given  
To mortals to behold the soul unhoused,  
Shining with lustrous light in the serene  
Of heaven, beside his mother's, as we see  
Full oft in the blue sky, together set,  
The moon and morning-star, ere peep of day,  
In kindred loveliness."

Our toiling barque  
Moved on, and left the orphan sleeping there  
By the great river. Silence, solemn, deep  
And dreadful brooded over us. Friend spake  
To friend in whispers. Here and there were seen,  
At times throughout the day, the passengers  
In groups ; but oftener alone they walked,  
Or stood, or sat ; each with his thoughts alone :  
As when a thunder storm is on the wing,  
Or earthquake trembleth near, all, all is calm,  
Preluding strange convulsion ; so we felt.  
The sultry day its long, dull, leaden hours  
Dragged on, till the great yellow sickly sun

Began to redden in the west, and cast  
His lurid glare o'er all the forest scene.  
One came and said to me : " It is not grief  
Hath kept the slave-boy on his couch all day,  
But the dread plague."

He lay upon that verge

Which overlooks eternity. As oft  
A star at morning, seen upon the peak  
Of Chimborazo, which retires behind  
That mountain suddenly, so did he look.  
Delirium lit his glassy eyes with thoughts,  
Apt for a higher being. Fixed, they shone  
As marking some great spectacle, to which  
His finger pointed. Aye his lips he moved,  
Like one borne on the stream of eloquence.  
At intervals, bright gleams of gladness spread  
O'er all his face, like light upon the hills,  
When the sun breaks through fleecy summer clouds,  
Which float like islands in the azure sky.  
Perchance angelic embassies he saw  
Waiting to carry him away to heaven.  
As one who sudden leaves the crowded hall  
Of his own dwelling, nor his sorrowing house  
Revisits more ; so he, an instant more,

And on his lips was stamped Death's signet pale.

Ere long the fatal summons once again  
Was sounded, and another answered it.  
'Twas whispered that the widow, too, was dead.  
Even as a taper's light quenched suddenly  
At gusty midnight, so her soul had passed  
From its earth-lamp. Deep gloom fell over us—  
And darker shadow spread its sable wing  
Around ; as when the full-orbed moon retires  
Behind the western hill, and leaves the vales  
To the dim lustre of the far-off stars.

Her dying words were few ; as one who heard  
Beside her couch related. From her sleep  
She woke, as morn dawned in the east, and said :  
“ The while I slept I heard the sounding wings  
Of angel couriers hastening to the earth  
From heaven—I saw—I saw my Lord, deceased,  
Stand in the clouds, and beckon me from far  
To meet him there, whereat I knew the hour  
Of death not distant.—For although unseen,  
'Twas palpable to my enraptured soul  
Prophetical. My dream was more than dream ;

No vision of the future e'er portrayed  
That future clearer, truer than it did.  
Awake, I see its wondrous scenery still,  
And feel its mystic meanings."

Suddenly

She stopped, as if an angel gave the word—  
The great pass-word of Death—one instant more,  
And the death mystery invested her  
With death's supremacy.

Near Genevieve

Upon a lonely islet green, o'er which  
An ancient spreading tree its shadow flung  
In the cool evening ; quiet, beautiful,  
Most beautiful to see was all the scene  
Around. The river's rocky palisades,  
By nature wrought with arcs and grand alcoves,  
As if the spirits of the wilderness,  
In the primeval ages, from the crags  
Had scooped them giant niches meet to hold  
Their own colossal statues, loomed aloft.  
Befitting was the isle for sepulture  
Of those we love ; there both we buried,  
The slave-boy and the widow.

Near the prow

We sat again, Albert and I : there sat  
The old man too. Day now around us shone  
And not the moon, as when the other three  
Communed with us of dreams—the orphan boy,  
The slave and widow. I remember this  
Of our converse that hour,—’twas Albert spoke :  
“ Dreams are,” he said, “ a mystery profound,  
Which ever have enchained my secret soul  
With deepest wonder. Who can tell but dreams  
Are creatures of some other universe,  
Which no astronomer with optic glass  
Has yet explored, in which the hand of God  
Has mapped out each man’s history ; has mapped  
out

The history of all the hierarchies ?  
Each dream might be a part of a great whole ;  
A section of our history sublime,  
Far reaching, but unknown till thus beheld  
In visions of the night. Wer’t so, the soul  
Might then, whene’er the body slept, its eyes  
Of sense all shut, look out beyond this world  
Into this universe of dreams, and read  
And study out its destiny on earth.  
’Tis true God is the sole interpreter

Of dreams ; and yet his teachings by them, clear,  
Might evermore fall silent on the soul,  
As dew upon the tender flower.

“ Till now,  
Ne’er did I feel the wondrous things in dreams  
Set forth. Not voice of trumpet sudden blown  
At midnight, in some leaguered city, tells,  
More truly, peril imminent, than the dreams  
We heard, so lately, told of great events  
Not earthly all. The universe of dreams  
Has oped its portals wide, and out have flown  
Its tribes like flocks of eagles. Who could think  
The dreams rehearsed, were like to couriers  
Commissioned in the secret halls of God,  
Laden with revelations, grand, sublime,  
Foreshadowing futurity, and soon  
To be accomplished here, our eyes before.”

“ Conscious am I,” the white-haired answering said,  
“ That to the meditative warnings oft  
Of future things are given, that the soul  
Forewarned, sees darkly, through the mists of time,  
The coming fortunes, be they evil or good,  
Which may befall it. Signs the future hath,

Outriders, like the winged lightning's flash,  
Which heralds the far thunder ere it rolls.  
Such signs are dreams, it may be, nor doubt I,  
The shadows of events they run before,  
Presaging what shall follow, on the road,  
To warn the dreamer. Thus full oft have I,  
At day's high noon when musing, sudden felt  
My mind stirred by some thought electrical,  
Most strange, and unconnected with the train  
Of casual meditations, fancy free,  
Which filled my bosom ere uncalled it came,  
To tell the coming accident, which soon  
Arose from out the darkling womb of time  
To satisfy the monitory thought.  
'Tis true the future has been seen from earth,  
Up from the distance, like to chariots borne  
Amid deep passes of the Alps, beheld  
By traveller from some topmost mountain peak."

'Tis certain there is near the erring earth  
A mighty world of dreams, to which in sleep  
Men pilgrimages make : above that world  
Of visions, other worlds there are more fit  
For habitations of celestial shapes.



One world of beauty is invisible,  
Most blessèd and most holy, made of old  
And consecrate, for everlasting homes  
To men redeemed, and sinless hierarchies.  
Between it and the erring earth flows on  
Unceasing intercourse : bright couriers  
Aye come and go between them ; and, albeit  
It is not given too much for mortal man  
To speculate on what that world may be,  
Yet dreams of holy men may adumbrate  
Its glories, and God's finger ever points  
Its presence, in each page of Holy Writ,  
That faith, not sense, can see it.

Thence I pass

Unsung, what farther fell, as on we sped,  
Skimming the shallows of the mighty flood,  
Though meetest theme for minstrelsy. We reached  
The shores of Iowa, and stepped astrand  
On the green hillock, as the evening star  
Rose in the sky, shining like hope, to cheer  
And welcome us.

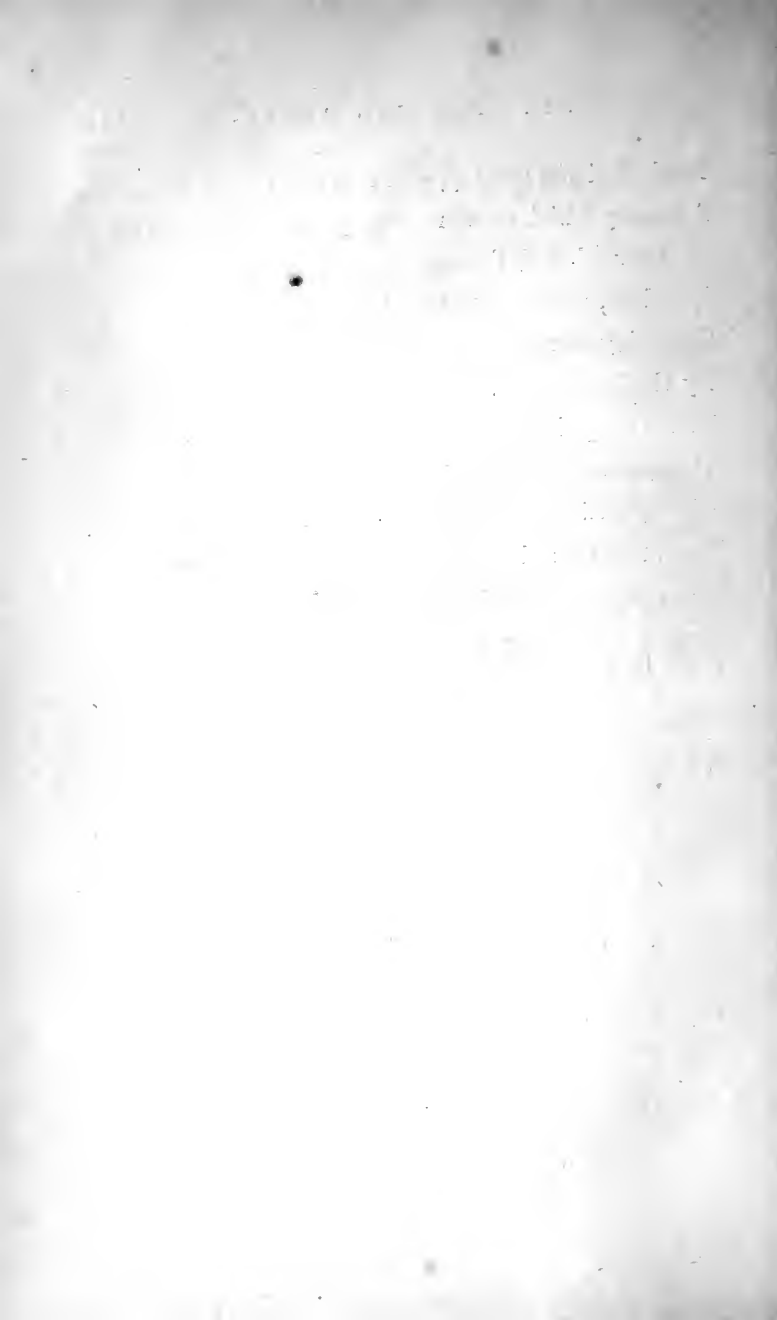
No numbers hath the harp  
To sing the meeting of the lovers ; and 'tis well :  
There is a joy too sacred to be told—

Art cannot picture it.—The sculptor's hand  
Shrouds with the veil what all his skill divine  
Must fail to render.

'Tis the nuptial night ;  
And though dark years, disastrous years, their robes  
Have trailed across the tract which intervenes ;  
Yet fresh in memory it is. I feel,  
The while I write, stirred with its presence—nay,  
I hear the music filling all the place  
With love and joy and witcheries. The veil,  
The bridal veil half hides the fairy form  
Of beauty leaning on that manly arm.  
What silence solemn and profound is this !  
The vows are uttered—those great words which live  
Forever.

It was midnight when I left  
That banquet hall with memories fraught.  
The boat awaited me beside thy shore,  
Dark Mississippi. Soon the splash of oars  
Was heard, and I was launched upon the stream.  
The night was calm and beautiful—the stars  
Sat on their burning thrones of sapphire, like  
A dynasty of kings. The silver moon  
Was setting, and her light, her lustrous light

Bewitched the scenery, and cast o'er all  
A beauty which no words can paint. The bluff  
Of Iowa, though from my gaze fast, fast  
Receding, showed the bridal mansion's light  
Gleaming alone, from out its shadowy trees  
By the broad river. Memory recalls  
That tranquil scene—the terraces I see,—  
The green acclivities of Iowa—  
The lighted mansion bright with brilliant hopes.  
I seem to hear the minstrelsy's soft swell,  
As angel whispers o'er the waters borne,  
Though years have rolled away, and all is changed,  
Myself not less than all, since that fair night,  
When last I looked upon those scenes sublime,  
Nor ever saw that wedded pair again.



BOOK SECOND.

THE DREAM OF ALBERT.

# THE HISTORY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT  
TO THE PRESENT TIME  
BY  
JOSEPH NEALE  
OF THE BOSTON BAR  
IN TWO VOLUMES  
VOL. I.  
BOSTON: PUBLISHED BY  
J. B. LEECH, 15 N. MARKET ST.  
1845.

# THE GUARDIAN ANGEL.

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## BOOK SECOND.

'Tis well Niagara is the joint domain  
Of the great Saxon empires of the world,  
America and England. Heritage  
Becoming two such kindred nations, dame  
And daughter.

Three years since, at noon, I stood  
Upon the rocky verge which overlooks  
The cataract and the Canadian shores.  
I felt the solid battlement of rock  
Quiver beneath my feet, as if the cars  
Of God drove down the precipice. The yeast  
O'er all that semicirque of waters, boiled  
Like caldron over subterranean fires,  
Kindled when earth was fluid. Hidden rocks  
Vexed evermore the waters, dashing them

From side to side. Like living creatures seemed  
The surges, which nor day nor night could rest.  
I likened them to ocean monsters, seen  
In storms by mariners ; at other times  
To the white tails of the celestial steeds  
In ancient history writ. The mighty chasm  
Yawned in the strength of everlasting rock,  
As though God's hand had smote it, as it smote  
That rock in Horeb, and the waters turned  
To burst from it forever. On the sides  
Of the dread walls clung many a shrub and tree  
Hiding the rents and crevices. Rocks huge  
As those used erst in dread angelic war  
By Milton sung, lay scattered far and near,  
Slimy and black with ages passed away.  
The place was as a vision seen in dreams,  
Not earthly.

Wondrous was the light and shade  
Which flitted o'er the gulf. Is it the wings  
Of eagles floating past the sun, which cast  
The long black shadows evermore athwart  
That scene of glory ? Clouds scarce fly so swift :  
Or may it be the pinions, to our eyes  
Invisible, athwart the noonday sun



Of angels sailing, which shut out the rays  
Flooding the world with light.—Upröse anon  
Pillars of misty smoke, upswallowing all,  
And straight evanishing. Bright rainbows shone  
As sudden spanning all the wide abyss,  
Then disappearing. Beautiful they shone,  
And came and passed away too fast, as aye  
The holy angels do. There was no sound  
Heard there but the eternal roar and rush  
Of the great flood, “as many waters heard”  
Erewhile, by him listening to God. When gloomed  
The place with awful clouds of smoke, I felt  
That then the Holy God of nature passed  
I’ the cloud of mist before me.

All sublime,

All beautiful is but a state of mind.  
Sublimity and beauty are within,  
Not things external. What is the ravine,  
The cataract, but for the mind, which gives  
To each sublimity. We animate  
The object with our feelings. What the charms  
Of loveliest forms, but that our eyes and mind  
Reflect themselves, the sense of what they give.  
Association aye embellishes,

And makes delight in beauty. Beauty lives  
In our own minds, and is itself the growth  
Of that which is within us, not without.

All who behold the mighty cataract  
Must see, must feel it diverse. Most the bard  
Of all beholders, for his soul instinct  
With thoughts remote and kindred, peoples it  
With his own beings. Every changeful play  
Of light and shade and mist inspireth him.  
New images arise before his soul,  
And pictures, whence to measure it. The bard  
Potent creator is, and giveth life  
To rocks and trees and streams and gulfs. His  
eye  
Sees things unseen by other eyes.—He hears  
The hidden voices of great nature.

So

The man of God that cataract surveys  
With feelings diverse from the bard. To him,  
“The voice of many waters” is the voice  
Of God. The scenery carrieth him from earth  
Into eternity. The imagery  
By which he measures it is not of earth.

Lake Erie filling up Ontario,  
Remindeth him of one eternity  
Into another poured, or time's huge stream  
Of years discharged into the ocean gulf  
Of the dread shoreless future. Sight sublime  
Those white-maned rapids, like the steeds which  
bore

The prophet heavenward, in Israel's cars :  
The ceaseless thunderings of the cataract,  
The roar of their great wheels, ascending aye  
The mountains of Eternity. The bows  
Across the vast abysm are arches fair—  
Celestial bridges for the angels built.  
The mists are God's earthrobes—the place itself,  
The vestibule of the eternal state—  
The dwelling of Jehovah—thus I felt,  
As I stood musing on a summer day,  
Contemplating the varied scenery :—  
The islands anchored fast above the Falls—  
The rush of waters like Euphrates poured  
Through Naharmalca—the stupendous leap  
Of the huge river—and the rapids, wild  
Like chargers, rushing o'er the precipice ;  
Or troops of angels on white horses, which

Stayed not for danger—rainbows numberless  
Ever appearing and evanishing—  
The trees in silence listening there, like seers  
Awaiting revelations—and the rocks  
Up-piled around me and above, in one  
Huge picture ;—angel presences, methought,  
Alone were wanting, to exalt the place  
Into the glorious portal opened wide  
Of all eternities ; eternity  
Present and Past and Future.

Suddenly

I was alone no longer ; strangers stood  
Beside me, yet not strangers all. The one  
Had hoary hairs and venerable form ;  
A stripling showed the other ; sire and son  
They were. The sire was even he, from whom  
I parted, erewhile, on the nuptial night  
In Iowa. That instant memory brought  
Back to my soul, like necromancer old,  
All the events of the long parted time  
Vivid and fresh, the interval of years  
Contracted to a day.

Our greeting o'er,  
We stood upon a wooded knoll, where full

We saw the vast abyss of waters wild,  
Surging below, and howling like the sea  
Of everlasting wrath. The lad cried out  
As he beheld the scene,—“ Now, I believe,  
This is one spot of earth unmarred by man,  
One nook of the primeval world, as first  
Fashioned by God. These seem the waters white  
And yeasty, which from out the shell of earth  
Spouted new-made ;—these spray drops, those  
which fell

From off the eaves of the new firmament,  
Yet moist from its creation, ere the sun  
Sent down his light and heat. Perchance these  
bows

Are beings of celestial birth and form—  
The presences of the angelic hosts,  
August, gigantic, fair, who shouting stood,  
What time God made the worlds ; still lingering  
here

Amid the scene, unwilling to forsake  
The relics of creation's morn.”

His sire

Took up the theme and said : “ In this vast scene  
God is made visible to us : God thought it all,

In His great mind, in the eternity  
Bygone. The cataract—the battlements  
Of fissured rocks, all gray and rent with years—  
The wooded isles, dark spray, and rainbows bright,  
Spanning the old abyss, were thought, erewhile,  
Deep lodged and hid in the Almighty mind,  
Matter is thought incarnate, thought divine.  
The seas with all their hosts, the woods with all  
Their tribes, the rivers singing through the woods,  
The wild ravines, the unseen winged winds,  
Which nestle in the tops of trees, and haunt  
The precipices drear by ocean strand :  
The stars, the moon, the sun, man, heaven itself,  
With all its mysteries, are but thoughts of God.  
Niagara is one sentence in the book  
Of nature, rich in meaning ; beautiful,  
Sublime and glorious ; but the Scriptures keep  
More blessed thoughts. Niagara cannot tell  
Of love, and grace, and mercy from of old  
Hidden in the Almighty mind.”

“ The place,”

I said, “ is ever holy unto me.

I also feel as if God’s presence gave

The scenery its strange and awful power.

It is not more than one short step from this,  
The spot we stand on, to eternity.  
One leap would make immortals of us all.  
As we behold it thoughts arise, which speak  
The greatness of our nature. Thoughts like these  
I ever have, when mid ancestral halls ;  
Or lonely lingering at the fabled haunts  
Of bards, where float the visions of their songs ;  
Or standing near the ruins of old fanes  
Festooned with ivy ; or by sepulchres  
Shrining the dust of martyrs, whose great acts  
Perish not from the earth ; or keeping watch  
Beside the dying. Ever in the soul  
Surges the sea of everliving thought,  
Pulsating ever to and fro. The waves  
Upon this sea, its tides, its calms, its storms,  
Its currents—all are thoughts. This very scene,  
All glorious as it is, and truly grand,  
Receives new glory, grows the more sublime,  
Invested by the soul's creative will  
With wonders not its own."

Awhile we stood,

We gazed, we mused in silence, and our thoughts,  
Like plumes plucked from archangel's wings, went out

Into the infinite. I thought of God,  
And asked myself, if all around I saw  
Was shadow, while all underlying it  
Was substance.

Not remote a height there is,  
O'erlooking all the cataract. Tall trees,  
Whose branching tops embraced and hid the sun,  
A semicirque had formed, like columns vast,  
The nave of some antique cathedral. Here  
A rustic seat invites the traveller  
To sit, and all the panorama grasp  
In his enraptured soul. We sat us down,  
And gazed, enwrapt in awe.

One mighty tree,  
Upon the verge of the o'erlooking rock,  
Our eyes attracted, for its trunk was scored  
With names of travellers, like a column carved  
With mystic hieroglyphs all o'er and o'er.  
Wrought in the characters of olden time,  
Albert's conspicuous was. The youth, whose love  
Had drawn me, to behold his bridal rite,  
Beyond the sounding Mississippi's flood.  
At once outspoke the aged man, and said :  
"Albert these letters graved; one early morn



Three summers since. Strangers we were, nor me  
Did he observe, so deep intent he was  
On this memorial. That night we met  
Upon the Mississippi made us friends  
Through all eternity's unreckoned years.  
And if the souls of friends gone off to God  
Revisit earth, his soul is here, e'en now."  
I answering said : " Albert I know is dead,  
But of his dying views, and hopes, and death,  
Naught have I heard."

" Most glorious was this death,"  
Replied the traveller.—" Much converse we held  
Beside his death-bed. Long he lingered low,  
Nor walked abroad in the rejoicing day,  
But in his chamber sat communing much  
With God. Great were the thoughts which sat  
    them down,  
Like kings, upon the throne of his pure mind.  
Oft spake he of his death, and interviews  
With angels in the visions of the night."

" The memory of holy friends," I said,  
" Is ever fragrant, and the narrative  
Of his last thoughts and feelings on the earth,

Would be as blessed incense to my soul.  
Nor could there be a place more fit than this  
For such discourse."

As holy pilgrim bent  
On travel, to remotest lands of earth,  
Who lingers not to gaze on beauty's face ;  
Nor parley hold with travellers whom he meets ;  
Or, as an angel sent to earth, by God,  
With errand from the throne, so he began :—

" 'Twas midnight, and by Albert's bed I sat :  
Startling he woke from wondrous dreams, and told  
Straightway their import—' In my thought,'  
said he,  
' I was alone, far from my native world,  
Standing upon a precipice abrupt,  
O'erhanging an abyss. Beneath, there rolled  
An ocean, whose huge billows ever dashed  
And broke to pieces on the jutting rocks.  
I looked on every side, but no one saw.  
There was not one memorial there of earth ;  
No work of art, no footprint left to tell  
If e'er before one of my mortal race  
Had visited the battlement sublime.

Instead of worlds afloat, the firmament.  
I saw beneath, as in a crystal lake,  
Studding it, planets and suns innumerable.  
The place was beautiful, unearthly all.

‘ Strange were the varied scenes I saw ; they came  
And passed like the white vapory cloud of mist,  
Oft seen by traveller on the hills of earth,  
When wingèd storms come flying from the sea.  
Now, ’twas a battlefield, where heroes closed  
In deadly conflict ; now a shoreless sea,  
Where sailed tall argosies bedight and trip  
With sails and pennons streaming. Instantly  
I saw cathedrals rising all around—  
These disappeared, and glens and waterfalls,  
And toppling mountains rose to view. I saw  
Distinct the effigies of ages rush  
Athwart the firmament, as figures fleet  
Across the boreal sky.

‘ Ere I had time  
To reason of the place, and the strange scenes,  
An angel suddenly flashed into form ;  
Of eminence beyond the height of man.  
No airs of angel greatness put he on.

Saluting me—as brother brother greets,  
From foreign land arrived, absent long years—  
Then said : “ Hail, brother, welcome to the world  
Of holy dreams ; a world which lies thine own  
And mine between, a world where God himself  
To mortals future things reveals, and sights  
Of angels gives.

“ I know thee well, O son  
Of earth. Oft have I met thee in this land  
Of dreams and mysteries ; and visions borne  
From God, all sinless, beautiful and full  
Of hope, as scenery spread out along  
The stream of life. The shadow followeth not  
The body closer than do I thy steps,  
E'er since thou hadst a being, ministering  
Alway to thee. I ne'er have left thee once,  
E'en in thy sleep, but vigil ever kept  
Beside thee. Earthly matron could not hold  
Such ceaseless watch. Upon the beetling cliff,  
Where youthful travel took thee, there I stood  
Between thee and the deep abyss below.  
Beside the banks of rivers, where the love  
Of nature carried thee, I always walked,  
Tending thee. When the star of love arose

On thy young heart, 'twas I who whispered hope  
Into thine ear. Thine agony of soul,  
When sin and grace for mastery o'er thee  
Contended, I beheld and pitied much.  
"What hour you knelt before the mercy-seat,  
I covered you with my celestial wings.  
Nor all my joy can I relate, as still  
I saw the gathering thoughts of love divine,  
E'en as a child upon the ocean shore  
Gathers white pebbles."

‘ Now, an instant here

The angel paused, then I—"Hierarch of God,  
I feel in some great presence, greater far  
Than aught of earth. It seems to me thy face  
In dreams hath met me often. Pass not then  
Away so soon from me, as thou art wont ;  
But linger here and of thy history speak.  
The distant memories of buried years  
Are flocking round me, like a wingèd plump  
Of eagles, at thy words, and my heart throbs  
In wild anticipation, for thou seem'st  
A messenger from God with tidings high  
Of mightiest import laden,—can it be  
I am akin to thee ?—strange is thy speech,

For how should I a mighty angel have  
Asleep or waking ? ”

‘ Then replied at once  
This angel of the Lord : “ Earthborn, of kin  
To thee I am, and formed for thee alone.  
Thy Guardian Angel I,—to every soul  
Is one—great office too. Thy mortal steps  
To tend, for evermore was I ordained.  
Ages ere thou wert born I lived, and none  
But God can tell how much I longed for thy  
Coming. I sought at every morn and eve  
The dial of eternity, and traced  
The shortening shadows of approaching years  
Which heralded thy advent.

“ On the tree  
Of Being, every opening bud I watched.  
Scarce from impatience could I hold, to see  
The earlier generations of thy race,  
Washed up on the young strand of earth, like  
barks  
New launched on summer seas ; and hear the  
shout  
Of welcome from their guardian angels, glad  
To meet them. Never canst thou know the years

Of solitude, the slow-paced centuries  
I passed alone in thought, awaiting thee :  
For what were all the worlds of God to me,  
And all the white-winged countless hierarchies,  
Without thy presence ! Fitting mate for me  
None was, till God made thee. The image fair  
Of thee, all uncreate, within my soul  
Stood ever forward, from the very morn  
Of my own being, and allured me o'er  
The gulf of ages, a great shoreless sea,  
Between thy birth and mine. Beyond all words  
To tell were my emotions, when I saw  
Thy birthday breaking in the orient sky,  
And heard the trumpet of Eternity  
Declare thy advent. Beautiful thou wert,  
Swaddled in mysteries and destinies.  
I saw thee take thy place among the ranks  
Of mortals ; immortality thy dower.  
Earth seemed that instant other world, thou erst  
Fairer than aught in the vast universe  
Yet visited by me. Thou art mine own  
Ordained ward. No mother ever loved  
As I love thee, nor sire, nor maiden fair  
Nurtured amid the dewy wilderness,

Where only flowers and brooks, and banks and braes  
Are seen, and God's own holy voice is heard.  
For sovereignty o'er all the souls create,  
And angels, would not I my charge exchange  
Of alway ministering to thee—espoused  
We are by God for all eternity.  
Nor would I injure thee, for the vast dower  
Of seven eternities. Nor God ordains  
That angel innocent, of all his host,  
Who renders not account for soul of man  
To him intrusted. Penalty for that  
Is utter loss of being. If perchance  
I could apostate turn, and cheat thy faith  
With falsehood, instant cast beyond the verge  
Of all created worlds, a thing accurst,  
I there should moulder ; not like garden weeds,  
Or tares or fumatory rank, uptorn from earth,  
To vegetate again, and bring forth crops  
Of ranker, fouler weeds ; but utterly  
Outside creation, in a grave dug deep  
For angels dead, where resurrection morn  
Ne'er comes. Such is that angel's fate who fails  
In duty. Oh most terrible the thought  
Unuttered is. I live for thee alone—



Without thy presence ever by my side,  
My immortality and destiny  
Would be a dreary wilderness of thought :  
Of bliss, and hope, and beauty, destitute."

' The angel waited here, with pause profound ;  
Thence I :—" My Guardian Angel, if, in years  
Gone by, thou hadst vouchsafed thyself as now,  
How beautiful and fresh would earth have been :  
To feel, to know thou walkedst by my side  
O'er the steep mountain, through the summer  
woods,

Adown the winding glen, and by the beach  
Of the Atlantic, where I mused alone  
What time the stars were bathing, and what time  
The billows rode like chargers o'er the sands,  
The howling winds pursuing them as fleet :  
To think thou wert within my cottage home  
Through gloomy winter's snowy, starless nights,  
Unseen, unheard, an exile from the sky,  
And ministering to me, to me alone.  
Why didst thou not reveal thyself to us ?  
My mother would have welcomed thee, and given  
Befitting honor to thy ministry.

Her angel too,—to think we never heard  
You whisper. Had we known such visitants  
Were ever with us, and no dwelling had  
Celestial, and of architecture fit  
For beings so divine, we would have sought  
In prayer heartfelt, the Throne of God, to build  
You tents in our near neighborhood. One spot  
There was beside the brook, a grove most rich  
In branching trees, and winding walks, and flowers,  
And ivy, and sweet eglantine, where oft  
I mused, and thought 'twas fitting place for spirits,  
On errand from the sky, to stoop and pause.  
Thou couldst have lodged by day, by night, and aye  
In our devotions joined : nay, taught us too  
The airs of minstrel angels. Pity 'tis  
Thy ministry was hidden from our eyes,  
As hidden as the mysteries of life  
In life's young morn. Thy history is full  
Of beauty, fuller than all tales of love  
E'er heard before : it lifteth my young thoughts  
Above the earth. If it be given thee more  
To utter of thyself, oh ! tell to me that—  
Impatient more to learn."

"My history,"

Answered my angel, "to antiquity,  
Before the stars arose and sang, goes back ;  
Long, long before the brood of worlds was hatched ;  
And ere the seeds of the vast planets fell  
Into the soil of time, and there took root :  
Myriads of ages ere the central suns,  
Amid these families of orbs, their vast  
Abysmal urns filled up with teeming years :  
And ere the earth, the erring star of God,  
Was aught but an idea in his mind.

"My memory is immortal, nor from it  
Can drop one thought : forgetfulness is all  
Unknown to spiritual beings. When arose  
The angel tribes at God's creating voice,  
I too. Eternity until that hour  
Was empty—none but God was there. I was,  
When I awoke to being, as I am,  
And have been since, save the ideas vast  
Gathered by travelling through the universe :  
I felt I was a thing of thought God made  
To live forever, and to minister  
To thee forever and for aye.

“ An arch

Standing upon the buttresses sublime,  
Of two eternities I saw—the thing  
First seen by me, and with a countless host  
Of beings like myself its shining height  
Ascending. I alone had reached and stood  
Upon the keystone, backward looking.

“ Next

I saw, no voice was heard in all the place,  
The Spirit of Eternity go forth  
Amid Eternity, seed scattering,  
Like husbandman in thine own earth-world, when  
Springtide hath come.

“ When I did look again,  
Ages, or what seemed ages, had passed by,  
And where the seed was sown, the stars and moons  
And suns were growing.

“ Last of all, I saw  
The earth, thy home-world, take its place, amid  
The firmament, when instantly a shout  
Of joy arose from the great family  
Of angels.

“ Since that ancient day of time,  
Travel hath carried me away

Into remotest worlds, which none  
Had visited, of all my myriad hosts :  
Into the wildernesses drear and lone,  
Around the poles of the great universe,  
Unfit for dwelling places, have I gone.  
Stars growing all along the milky-way  
Visited. On the alpine peaks of worlds  
Which never can be trod by human feet  
Stood. Through the gardens and the groves  
Of sinless worlds, the heritage divine,  
Ordained for souls elect, when they shall go  
Away from heaven to meditate on earth  
Their nature world, roamed have I, glad, glad—  
Musing, and holding intercourse with God, have I  
Spent centuries in highest heaven itself.  
Still wondrous interest ever has thy world  
To me. There is no cloudy mountain-top,  
Nor hidden glen found out by streamlet clear,  
Running with music in its heart, from morn  
To eve ; nor grove, with old ancestral trees,  
And lawns, forever consecrate to love  
And minstrelsy ; nor castellated rocks,  
To memories of olden time espoused ;  
Nor upland lake, sequestered 'mong the hills,

Where clouds delight to dwell, have I not been.  
But more anon"—Then paused.

‘ Here out I spake  
Unto the angel, saying : “ Holy one,  
Thy history most glorious is, replete  
With the antiquities of time and earth.  
Thy memory goeth back beyond the fall  
Of angels from their heavenly thrones. Though dire  
Their story, and disastrous to my race,  
New view of God it would unfold to me,  
If told.”

“ This much may I unfold to thee,” he said.  
“ The sun of man’s first Sabbath on thy world  
Had set all glorious, as the sunsets were,  
Ere yet the black angel, sin, trailed his robe  
O’er the blest earth. There was no angel left  
Around the great white throne, save those bright  
hosts

Who never leave its shining steps. We all  
Had gone to our appointed posts amid  
Immensity. Some stood upon the walls  
Of heaven ; some to the distant stars and suns  
Vigil had gone to keep ; but many more

On pilgrimages to these worlds, to see  
Their seas, and streams, and hills, and woods and  
lakes—

The haunts where angels in the mighty past  
Had travelled. Some beside the sea of glass  
Stood gazing on the suns bemirrored there.  
Some stood alone, in meditation deep  
On the tall hills of bliss. Some sat and talked  
Within the bowers which skirt the crystal sea ;  
Some wrote their thoughts in books ; some min-  
strealsy

Achieved ; some with the ALMIGHTY ONE  
Communion held. Upon the Atlantic strand  
Of earth, I walked alone, absorbed, and rapt  
In vision, questioning the future, when  
Thou too shouldst, musing, wander there.

“ My dream

Was broken by the awful trump of God—  
The trumpet of eternity, whose blast  
Shook all the universe. Portentous was  
That clangor ; ne’er before had its dread voice  
Been heard since time created was.  
Thrice blown, its summons every angel heard,  
And sudden hasted to the mount of God.

As I passed through the firmament of earth,  
On rapid, rapid pinion, fleet as thought,  
The road and highways of immensity  
Were filled with angels on the wing. Nor long  
Till we the everlasting valley reached,  
Outspread on each side round the awful mount  
Of the Eternal—there the synod met,  
The synod of the angels : thither rushed,  
As rush at times the thoughts of myriads  
Of men, into the opened ear of God,  
When yawning earthquakes frighten them. Great  
was

The number of the shining angels there  
Before the throne, obedient to the call  
Of God. Like a great noiseless sea were we :  
Upon the very pillars of the throne  
Some leaned, and I upon the steps.

“ The mount

Itself was hidden in a cloud of light,  
Of lustrous light, intensely clear, which shut  
From every eye the throne. No more we saw  
Beyond the steps ascending, and the lamps,  
The mystic lamps around them.

“ Suddenly



That argent shining cloud was rolled away  
From off the mountain, and we saw the throne,  
And ONE on it human in form. Nor e'er  
Before such sight had been beheld, or felt, of eyes  
Angelic even—nor that presence of God  
Erst been made manifest. Desire intense,  
And aspirations had been nursed, sublime,  
Since first we were, that wondrous brightness through  
To pierce, and find some outlines shadowing Him :  
And yet to us that wish, o'erbold perchance,  
Had been vouchsafed not. True, we could not  
brook

To see infinitude, and yet we wished that God  
Would nearer come to us ; and in our form  
Be seen for briefest instant. Now that wish  
Had answer, but the form he took was man,  
Not angel.

“ Mighty the emotion was  
Of every spirit, in that vast conclave  
At sight of God. Upon his head blazed out  
The diadem of dread eternity,  
And in his hand the sceptre. On the throne  
There lay the opened volume of decrees,  
Old as eternity itself. Above

His crowned head, the bow of mercy hung,  
And at his feet, like angel sleeping, lay  
Justice Eterne. No word was uttered there,  
Speechless we stood, and gazed, and marvelled long,  
At Godhead visible.

“ The mystery soon  
Of Inspiration, like a cloud o’ercame  
Us, as we gazed, and fitted us to hear.  
The trumpet spoke again, twice, thrice—the trump  
We heard erewhile. Then fell these awful words  
Upon our ears, the words from out the throne,  
The grand white throne.

“ ‘ Intelligences first  
And highest in the scale of being—hear :  
Your chiefest angel, and his chosen peers,  
No more shall sit upon their vacant thrones.  
Scarce had ye left the battlements what time  
The evening anthem ceased, when he, unbid.  
The secret chamber of eternity  
Entered, infringing on its mystery ;  
The prophecy he read of his own fall,  
And of his own estate forfeit to man—  
I’ the future born, new-born, on earth’s young star.  
No more he learned, but fled with hasty foot,

And told his listening peers, who not rebuked  
His treason : instant down he fell from heaven :  
Such fate befell them all. But fear not ye—  
Powers, Principalities, for treason here  
No more shall enter in—elect are ye,  
Infallible.’

“ No word, angel returned  
To Him upon the throne, for holy awe  
Constrained us—awe, that black apostasy  
Had crept into the citadel hard by,  
The seat of God. Nor had he ceased to speak  
Ere the broad glory closed around the mount,  
And hid him from our eyes.

“ While we stood  
In silence musing, suddenly a sound  
Was heard, as if of messenger august  
Approaching, who, from distant world came on  
With urgent tidings, of most high import.  
Then louder woke the trumpet’s blasts. At once  
We saw the angel of the earth alight,  
Before the veiled throne. His tidings were  
Awful, and tingled in our ears, like some  
Death message. Audience instantly had he

From God within the veil. These were the words  
He spake :

“ ‘ Sire of Eternity, the Earth,  
Thy youngest child, is lost. The spirit of sin  
Hath rapt it from us. All around its coasts  
Angels are stationed, till I shall return,  
Forbidding all egress to the exiled  
From heaven. The glorious man that sat its throne  
And his fair mate no more are sovereign there :  
He too has been discrowned, and down the slope  
Of ruin rushes. By the guarded gate  
Of Paradise, I left him sitting, low  
At his feet, a suppliant, lay his spouse  
Despoiled of all her beauty. Intercourse  
Between that star, and all the sisterhood  
Of worlds, is closed. Naught heard I when I left  
But the terrific wail of man, and the shouts  
Of the apostate angels.’ Thus spake he,  
The angel of the earth, and waited mute  
God’s answer.

“ Fast as thought lights up the mind,  
So rent the veil of glory, and he spake  
Again, the Great Invisible from out  
The mystic throne :

“ ‘ Son of the morning, Son  
Of light and truth, the loss of earth, and fall  
Of man, is written full in the decrees  
And secrets of eternity. This too  
Is written, angels shall apostatize,  
Nor e’er be reinstated—Justice must  
Her symbol have. Of man it is not so :  
He may redeemed be, and so redeemed,  
OUR MERCY to all time shall symbolize.  
The earth-star hath a destiny more grand  
Than all her sister spheres. Myself its soil  
Will tread in sorrow ; and at my advent,  
Horror that *time* shall shudder at, and earth  
Be riven ; joy, that shall make angels weep  
Shall succeed and surcrease. For erring man  
The ocean of eternal love is stirred  
To its unfathomable, ancient depths.  
But for the angels mercy never pleads.  
The earth shall be ennobled ; angels too,  
Who endure sinless, shall their destinies have  
With man’s enlinked.”

I thought the angel’s voice  
Trembled on uttering these mysterious words.  
A cloud, too, passed athwart his face—the words

The while went echoing through my throbbing  
heart.

When fitting pause was o'er, soon as I saw  
The angel's musing cease, I ventured this  
To say :—

“ Brother divine, thou knowest all I ask,  
And more ; imperishable are thy words  
As blossoms on the tree of life, replete  
With beauty and with life. Oft have I sighed  
For tidings of my sire, and mother dear  
In heaven : a child was I, when angels came  
For father, and him took to dwell with them  
In their celestial world. Orphans we were,  
I and my sisters too ; I eldest, they  
Younger : we three but children under five.  
The morn I was an orphan, my grand-dame  
Me took to gaze upon his face, and said—  
I, silent, wondering why he was so pale  
And still—that I was now an orphan boy.  
Her words were meaningless to me, and yet  
They pierced me through, the language from the  
dead.

I speak not of our orphanage : of it  
Thou canst not know : none but the orphan knows.

Eventful history is ours, most mine,  
As manhood came to me, my mother died :  
Her illness, death and burial, were all told  
At once to me.

“ I never can forget  
That morn we parted, one short year before ;  
Beside the hawthorn tree, near by the door,  
Her cottage door, we parted : fair she was,  
Most beautiful, as holy cherub is,  
Her blue eyes aye reflected heaven to me :  
Suffused they were with tears that morn—her  
hand—  
Her long, fond kiss—her words of warning kind—  
Her agony at parting—all I feel—  
I see—I hear this moment, as if years  
Had been rolled, and I again stood near  
Her cottage door, that morn.”

The angel's face  
Brightened with thoughts divine, as I here paused ;  
And soon in tones seraphic said : “ Most filial thou,  
Son of the erring star of time. Thy sire  
Sitteth among the prophets of the earth,  
Enthroned, encrowned, before the great white  
throne ;

With them in high converse he takes a part :  
With them on mighty embassies to distant orbs  
He goes. Oft have I met him leading on  
Cherubic cohorts to the earth ; once him  
Sailing the Empyrean, I beheld,  
None with him save his angel. Glorious was  
His mien, as one on Mercy's errand sent  
To some wayfarer on the strand of earth.  
Thy mother, too, oft have I seen of late :  
More beautiful now is her eye of blue ;  
More fair her face : ethereal all is she :  
Nor is there in the sinless empire vast,  
Daughter of earth, with witchery of mien  
Surpassing. Spirits just arrived from worlds  
Which never saw the earth, pause to admire  
On passing her. Well is she known up there,  
For every angel from the earth arrived,  
She visits to inquire if they saw thee.  
There is not in thy history one jot  
Unknown to her. But yesternight, just as  
The Evening Star uprose, I bade her hail,  
As she came near to minister to thee :  
And hail, when with the angels of the night  
Upflew, when morning lit upon the hills



Of earth. Thy father and thy mother hold  
Long parleys by the stream of life ; and in  
The bowers of bliss, make symphonies at morn  
And eve, on their great golden harps."

"Great angel of Jehovah, bear with me,"  
I said, "for I have many things to ask.  
First, what is death, or rather what is it  
To die ? Does the soul think in the death-hour ?  
Does the soul see at once the spirit realms ?  
When it is loosened from the body frail,  
Doth it remain a season on the verge,  
I' the mists of the shadow ? Who first gives it hail  
When like uncaged eagles out it flies ?  
How far is to the throne ? What escort bears  
Its frailty to the Judgment Seat ? Are souls  
Which have already found immortal homes,  
In the bright country of the hierarchies,  
Spectators of the dying struggle ? Tell,  
Tell me, O angel ! does the soul unfledged  
Take all its thoughts and feelings up with it,  
And leave its body like a shattered harp,  
Whose strings are jangled and flung loose ? Per-  
chance

'Tis sin to ask such mysteries divine ?  
If not, O answer me ; but if in part  
'Tis sin, speak part : of part be mute. Explain,  
Spirit, if thou may'st, the mystery of death !”

Straight as I paused, the angel musing, stood  
A moment, then replied : “ The mystery of death  
I know not, none but who have died may know—  
That did I never, nor can I ever die.”

“ Hold !” I exclaimed, “ wise angel ! art thou then  
A creature, finite in thy sense, as I ?”

Answering, he said : “ We both are angels, thou  
Incarnate angel art ; but spirit I,  
Pure, immaterial spirit. To mortality  
Matter must yield, but spirit may not die.  
Much of the history of man I know,  
Much of angelic history—of death  
Nothing, although thousands of years I live.  
Ask me of any of the far-off worlds—  
Ask me of the immortal hierarchies—  
Ask me of the remotest future, far  
Beyond the confluence of all the streams

Of time, i' the ocean of Eternity.  
Ask me of earth's sublimest deed of crime—  
Ask me of the remedial scheme of grace !—  
Ask me of Earth, and Hell, and Heaven, and God,  
And I will answer thee ; but ask me not  
Of death, for in it I no portion have."

" Spirit," I said, " almost omniscient thou,  
Bearing the burden of such knowledge. Ne'er  
Shall I in lore ascend to height so great.  
I feel as one upon a mountain-top,  
Arrayed with clouds, who cannot see the vale  
Below, with all its varied scenery ;  
Nor the blue welkin overhead. My thoughts  
Run to and fro, and come again to me,  
Like messenger sent forth, who still returns  
Unfit to make report. Enlighten me,  
Great angel, of the mighty past, and tell  
Of the Death Angel. Much I dread to meet  
His advent. In my youth oft have I waked  
Amazed, at midnight, for I thought the wail  
Of the sad wintry wind around our house,  
Was the dread herald of his silent tread.  
Are the surroundings, and the awe

Which thrills our hearts, at hearing of his name,  
But the wild mystic dreams of poet souls ?  
Tell me, I pray thee.”—How the face divine  
Of the attentive angel brighter gleamed.  
It may be that the memories of scenes,  
Of grand triumphal death scenes flashed across  
His vision. This, he answered :—

“ True, I know

Thy race dreads the death-angel, but it is  
The wild creations of your bards they dread.  
The angels, who let out the deathless soul  
From its clay palace, are as numerous  
As are the spirits which they do release.  
On earth each prison has its keeper, who  
The keys keeps faithful, so is ’t in all worlds.  
There is an angel stationed at the door  
Of each imprisoned soul, to ope the leaves  
And set it free, when the eternal knell  
Announce the hour. Thine own death-angel now  
Tarries, though thou him seest not. Serene  
And glorious he, as all heaven’s angels are.  
The fallen hierarchies, discrowned and lost,  
No office hold in thy fair earth. They seek  
Such office, but seek vainly : only when

The soul has sinned away its day of grace,  
And left the flesh, their sovereignty begins  
To sway and rend it. But a guarding spirit,  
The sentinel and servant, ministers  
Each to one soul. The Spirit of Death has charge  
The wheels of life to stop, whene'er the time  
Of the soul's unbodying arrives, nor he  
Knoweth the hour, but vigilant must wait  
Until the moment. There no darkness is  
Forewarning him. This secret God keeps pent  
In his own mind. This Spirit of Death has  
charge

To keep that shrine deserted of its soul,  
Until it shall come back for it. Great charge !  
Oft have I seen the angel hovering o'er  
The corpse yet warm with recent life, while round  
Stood friends in anguish all convulsed :  
O ! little thought they of the presence there  
Of him immortal and invisible.  
There is no bier, whence one may not be seen  
Watching o' it, nor grave without one nigh.  
Oft have I, ere thou wert born into life,  
O'erflown the antique countries of earth,  
By winter's windy, gloomy, midnight moon,

Nor e'er yet untended grave have seen  
Of angel.

“ At the resurrection hour,  
When centuries of intervening years  
Have been ingulfed in the vast shoreless sea  
Of old Eternity, the Spirit of Death  
Shall build the palace up again, fit house  
For the returned and travelled soul. Sublime  
Is the death-angel in his love : sublime  
Watching the sepulchre untired, through long  
And dreary centuries.”

“ Most marvellous  
Thy teachings are, O angel,” answered I.  
“ ’Tis strange that youth and age alike should dread  
A myth. Now answer me this one thing more.  
Explain the meaning of that valley dark,  
And called, ‘ of the Shadow of Death,’ with horrors  
thick,  
Of which I oft have read and dreamed.”

At once  
He thus upspoke : “ There is a Vale of Death  
Which thou must cross to reach Eternity ;  
But ’tis a place with fancies thick set round,  
And dreams of fiction. Beautiful it is

As the approach to heaven must ever be.  
Another vale there is for those who die  
Weighed down by loads of unrepented sin,  
Which they must pass toward their appointed place,  
Where'er that be. Beauteous *it* cannot be ;  
But of its horrors, possible or true,  
Naught know I, nor can tell."

"Is that the Vale  
Of Death," I asked, "the which I must pass  
through,  
Whose gate I see, thick thronged with holy souls,  
Its wide-spread portals entering into bliss ?"

"That is thy Vale of Death," he answering said,  
"Oft have I travelled through it : angels aye  
Are journeying there : some, business—pleasure  
some

Invite. Great multitudes were there, that day  
Messiah passed through it from Calvary ;  
Thicker than trees amid the wood, or stars  
In northern skies, when winter's icy winds  
Howl o'er the ocean. In all worlds 'twas known  
Messiah would explore the Vale of Death :  
The hour was known ; and from most distant orbs

Upon the outskirts of the universe,  
Angels to meet him came. I too was there,  
And heard the cry of anguish—Why hast thou,  
My God ! my God ! forsaken me ? and heard  
From out the gloom, the answer dread to hear,  
Unheard of man—Thou art forsaken thus,  
Because for man thou diest, thyself a man.  
I saw the Man-God die, and with his soul  
Went on to bliss. Vast, vast, beyond all words  
To tell, was the assemblage gathered there,  
Waiting in silence all along the road  
To glory, there to welcome him. The scene  
Was only grander, when he came again  
Embodied, living, from the sepulchre.

“ Within the sepulchre, that hour I stood  
When he returned from his great tour to heaven :  
I saw him enter in, and the cold form  
Laid there, reanimate. I saw the door  
Of the sealed tomb to the angel’s touch unloose,  
And heard distinct seraphic voices tell  
Grand tidings to the faithful few who came  
At early morning, ‘ Christ is risen to-day ! ’  
Nor knew I e’er till then, that the low grave



Is not a darksome, doleful place, but full  
Of angel presences, and so most fit  
For saints to lodge in. Holy is the grave  
Since Christ himself the precincts has passed through.  
And holy too the avenue which leads  
From earth thereunto—such thy Vale of Death !  
The entering soul, each one, his passport hath,  
Unknown, unheard on earth. That secret word  
To thee shall be revealed, whene'er the hour  
For thine unbodying comes.”

“ Seraphic friend

And brother,” I exclaimed, “surpassing kind  
Is God to give me one so wise as thou  
In mysteries sublime, my steps to guide.  
Most grateful I for all thy lore has told,  
Yet more I wish to know—there is a mist  
Before me, that concealing, which my soul  
Yearns to know perfectly. Great is thy power  
Of speech. So smooth thine oratory flows,  
So full of pictures, that I comprehend  
As if by instinct, all profoundest things  
In living light displayed. I know, before  
My thirsty eyes thou canst portray ‘the new  
And living way.’ ”

“ My ward, my child beloved,”  
The angel said, “ ‘ the new and living way,’  
Relates to the soul’s feelings. If its thoughts  
All cling to Christ, as verdant ivy clings  
To the cathedral ruins, then they flow  
All heavenward, through ‘ the new and living way ;’  
If, otherwise, the soul be filled with self,  
On its own merits dwell, and deeds of love,  
As fitting it for place i’ the realms above,  
Then the old road of works must it toil through,  
Which hath long years been shut—a road no more.

“ Perchance—for I would have thee go with me  
Distinct and clear of mind—should I ascribe  
Man’s twofold way of life, evil and good,  
As two diverging roads, this old, that new,  
Through Time, from its beginning to the dawn  
Of his Eternity, before him laid—  
Better might’st mark it. Every living man  
Hath his own phase of genius, which subtends  
His sensuous being, and each several phase  
Its own peculiar orbit, in which to move  
Its thoughts like planets round their sovereign sun.  
The lover’s orbit is a moonlight path,

Where love and hope and beauty linger ; where  
No storms nor sorrows find a resting-place.  
The poet's is along the stormy tops  
Of precipices, by the ocean's verge,  
By sounding waterfalls, by woods, by wilds,  
Through continents unseen by vulgar eyes,  
Where thoughts grow on the trees, like leaves and  
fruit,

And where the soul communes with presences  
Revealed to bards alone. The ambitious soul  
Hath for its high emprise an orbit too.  
He sees his name writ in his country's scroll  
Of deathless glory. Like as those who stray  
O'er the earth's mountain-tops, or valleys green ;  
So travel ever all those souls along  
Their chosen orbits. Orbits too, there are,  
Of good and evil ; nor are souls exempt  
From choice of one or other.

“ From the dawn  
Of time, far back as the first Sabbath day,  
A road was traced, by which the souls, first made,  
Might travel to their goal ; but short the time  
The road was pervious. It was locked what time  
Man fell apostate. Then its gates I saw

By angels closed and barred to ope no more.  
For man's obedience to the law henceforth  
Impossible, no more should proffered be  
The master-key to move the locks divine.  
Oft through departed years, travelled have I  
To see its portals, if they e'er should ope,  
But still fast closed they stood, these direful words  
Writ high above the lintel, words of flame,  
'Our God is a consuming fire,'—no soul  
By that old road finds entrance into bliss.

"Now mark me—of the new and living way  
Decreed of old, ere yet the universe  
At God's creative voice arose. The way  
Of grace it is—the openest road, most wide  
For human feet or angels. By it the soul,  
Filled with this scheme divine, at ease ascends  
To bliss eternal.

"Like a river, vast  
As inland sea, which hath its fountain head  
In some frore glacier, or mountain range,  
This scheme goes back to deep eternity,  
Ere yet the angels were, or the ancient stars  
Were lighted ; secret, grand, and full of love

I' the Father's bosom slumbered, which the Son  
There lying, only knew.—'Twas this, that God  
The Father, in whom represented is  
All Godhead, which can be, in one threefold,  
Father, Son, and Spirit ; in his Son sole-born,  
To guilty man should reconciled be :  
That scheme the Son accepted, and became  
Vicegerent for his chosen. These the terms  
Of that high covenant—Messiah should  
Incarnate be, incarnate die for man,  
And rising for him, intercession make  
Before the Father's throne. To this  
The Holy Spirit the last great sanction gave ;  
And ratified it stood, that He his share  
Of this contract sublime, the Elect of God  
To enlighten, sanctify and glorify,  
Should have forever. Souls which comprehend  
This plan of grace eterne, and in it find  
Supernal bliss, are pilgrims in ' The new  
And living way.' What time this scheme was oped  
To angels, all our harps awoke to song,  
Sweeter than any minstrelsy, erewhile  
Poured in the ear of Godhead ; or since then  
Breathed from Æolian harps, or Dorcian mood

Of soft recorders, until time was full,  
And harps seraphic Christ triumphant hailed  
With heaven's full diapason, and the shout  
Of Hallelujahs to the Prince of Peace.  
I felt that earth was yet God's world, nor cast  
Forever from his presence all divine,  
All merciful. The planets and the stars  
Would soon be dashed to atoms, if they sought  
New orbits for their wanderings ; so the soul  
Which keepeth not within the strait confine  
Of this new way of grace its steadfast track."

The angel paused ; I felt his argument  
As one who listens to an orator  
Inspired with his own theme. I now beheld  
"The new and living way" as clear as if  
The wondrous ladder of the patriarch,  
With angels thronged, before me rose. Anon  
The wish for ampler knowledge moved within,  
And thus again I spoke to him, and said :  
"My Guardian Angel, bear with me awhile  
In all my asking. Is no volume writ  
By angel which combines all angel lore ?  
Had I such tome, into the wilderness

I would hie me and revolve it, till I grew  
Wise as thou art."

Instant he, answering, said :

" I know thou lovest books, when yet a child  
They pleased thee. Oft have I gone with thee  
Unto the peak of toppling crag, amid  
The forest, where the waterfall alone  
Was heard, retreat befitting meditation ;  
And watched thee for long hours, intent on song  
Or prose new-built. Earthly books there are  
Fit for all time, fit for all study, some :  
One for Eternity—then wait—thou must,  
Till thou art glorified, and thou shalt find  
Thee books, unfolding mysteries beyond  
All present wishes, all imaginings.  
Each planet hath its own peculiar books—  
Its own hath heaven. The angels authors all—  
Greater than others, some. Their voyages  
Long might detain thee ; and their works to view,  
Would claim eternities of mortal time,  
Mere cycles of Eternity. Their lays  
Outbid imagination. In the worlds  
Naught is there like the archetypal book  
Of God, nor e'en the book so called below—

It stands 'mid the library of heaven, all writ  
In the mystic letters of Eternity.  
Be patient ! nigh at hand the hour awaits  
Thy disembodiment. What glories then  
Shall burst on thy enraptured soul at death ! ”

“ And stand I on the brink of death ” I cried,  
“ O angel ?—for I fear to die—to stand  
Unclothed and naked to the inmost thought,  
Before the eyes of the Most Holy One !  
My sins are great, so great, that though I hide  
In the cleft-rock of mercy, they rise up  
And shroud the star of hope from me. My hand  
Of faith seems withered, and I cannot cling  
Unto the naked word of God.”

“ Hold, hold ! ”

My Guardian Angel cried : “ The Gospel scheme  
Meets every want and need of sinful man.  
Demerit, and what merit, alike are  
To the eye of God. Grace—grace alone thy kind  
Hath lifted to salvation. . Grace from God  
Is not bestowed on goodness ; nor from what  
The world calls vice withheld. The Father’s will  
Alone is the exhaustless source of grace.



The love of God in Christ the mystery is,  
Involved in saving man. This well I know,  
For God I heard announce it, on that night  
Man was exiled from Paradise. I met  
That very night with all our hierarchies,  
To meditate on it. Vast multitudes  
Of angels have e'er since in session been,  
Investigating this high problem. Hence  
To all the Gospel pardon offered is.  
Fear not, earthborn, though great thy sins, yet  
Christ  
Is greater—get thee faith.”

“ ’Tis that I lack,”

I answered sorrowful.

To this, he said,  
In kindest phrase : “ My mortal brother, faith  
Is God’s rich gift. Faith thou canst not create  
As ’twere a poem. It is given, not made.  
He giveth it like all his other gifts,  
As seemeth good to him. Ask for it, thou.  
Look in and see, if in thy heart e’en now  
Its living germs be not. Faith never looks  
Within the heart, but still without. It takes the  
word

Of God in all its nakedness. If doubts  
Arise, it dashes them aside, as one  
Who swimming breasts the billows from his path.  
As living pictures set before the eye,  
The promises writ there it makes its own,  
As they were things embodied. 'Tis perchance  
*Assuring* faith, for which thou sighest. Well !  
It none can find, till they have reached the height  
Of holiness sublime. *Adhering* faith  
Is saving. If thou have not joy and peace,  
Still to the Saviour cling—to Him hold fast !  
Remind Him of his promise and be saved.  
The patriarchs, 'tis writ, all died in faith.  
I saw them in the harvest-field of truth  
Go reaping handfuls of the promises,  
And carrying them, as reapers carry sheaves,  
Adown the Vale of Death."

I answered here :

"The promises I know, and feed on them  
As feeds the bee on flowers—perennial flowers.  
Those promises round mortal sorrows twine,  
As roses young 'bout columns riven and gray.  
Hast thou," said I, inquiring, in reply,  
"E'er whispered, my own angel, in mine ear

Such promises, for often have I felt  
As if the air with wings around me waved ;  
When some bright glimpse of promised hope,  
    illumed  
My wavering soul ? ”

Cautious he answer made :

“ The promises perchance, inscribed divine  
On angel banners, borne by them in pomp  
On Mercy’s embassies, have flashed in light  
Upon thy musing soul, as scenery  
Beheld in youth, arises suddenly,  
Ofttimes before the mind of one grown old.  
Perchance the converse thou hast overheard  
Of disembodied spirits, passing nigh,  
In high communion, through the realms of space  
Whispering of the promises.”

As here

He paused and looked on me, “ My mother,” thus  
I spake, “ was aye a constant gatherer  
Of promises ; and many a time for hours,  
In winter’s gloomy, windy midnight, I  
Sat with her and collated them. That still  
The pages where they lie, with pencilled lines  
Drawn by my infant hand, inscribed are

All through the treasured Bible of our house.  
I stored them too i' the tablets of my mind,  
Often repeating them. ' 'Twas well,' she said,  
' For me to hoard them there, for time might come  
When I should need them, and no book be nigh.' "

The curtains of my dream were drawn apart,  
And all its scenery 'gan shrink and shift,  
As mist towers melting in the morning glow ;  
When for an instant the angelic form  
Of him, who spake less distinct and less  
As he were vanishing : " Stay—stay," I said,  
" O angel, nor invisible become  
To who would ask thee much, or ere thou go.'  
Hereon the dream rekindled ! up he loomed,  
As on some vale or wide expanded plain  
An heavenward spire late wreathed in vaporous  
clouds  
Starts into sunlight. He, a thing of life  
And glory, e'en more glorious than before.  
His face, how fair, how meek and holy ! words,  
Earth-words cannot portray him. Then, these  
words  
He spake, and they were as the words of one

Who sees some spectacle of mystery  
Approaching nigh : “ My earthborn brother haste,”  
He said, “ even now I hear the sound of wings  
Far off—portending mightier change !”

“ Yet hold

A little, of my Saviour I would ask—  
The Prince of Peace, and where his presence now ? ”

“ This,” quickly answered he, “ is all I have  
To tell thee. To all angels dear the name  
Of Jesus is, and ever upmost stands  
His image, in our Godlike memory.  
His face, his form, his plans, his words, his works,  
Are precious to us all. The minstrelsy  
Of Heaven is full of him. Memorials  
Of Him fill every avenue of bliss,  
And battlement, and hill, and vale, and stream,  
And sea. All worlds are full of his great name—  
The sceptre of Eternal Sovereignty  
Is holden by a human hand, that hand  
Messiah’s. Eyes which see the universe ;  
The ears which hear all sounds of joy and woe  
Of all intelligences ; yea, the mighty heart  
Which hath pulsations for all things, are His.”

He paused, for nearer, and more near, approached  
The angel embassy. Myself, I heard  
What seemed the rolling of the chariot wheels.  
At once I asked : “ Who comes, O angel ? thou  
Who seest them, speak to me.”

Outspoke he clear :  
“ Ten thousand times ten thousand angels. Such  
Celestial cavalcade arrives on earth  
For every holy soul unbodying.”

“ Stay,  
Stay, angel ! ” I exclaimed, “ a wondrous change  
Is passing. Is it the mystery of death ?  
I feel as one who sudden floats away  
On a receding wave. My glass of thought  
Is broken into fragments. What is this ?  
Am I an immaterial ray of light  
Extinguishing ? Am I a setting star,  
Or rising planet on yon distant sky  
Beyond those opening breaches ? Can it be  
I am myself no more ? I feel my thoughts  
Around me throng like eagles on the wind :  
Each grander, mightier, than erst. Am I  
All soul—What presences are these—What light  
Is this ? ”

The voice of the old man shook here,  
And for an instant suddenly was hushed.  
I too was silent. Soon the mastery  
O'er his emotions fitted him to tell  
The sequel ; and he thus resumed, and told  
The whole—these are the words :

“ Nor other thought  
Passed o'er Albert's lips. The narrative sublime  
Was ended of his dream divine. A flash  
Of light passed suddenly across his face,  
As if the soul in passing out illumed  
The shrine, where it had lodged through all its  
years.

As suddenly his circling arms embraced  
What seemed to me the air, but likelier was  
The soul outgoing. Instantly he changed  
Into a marble bust of loveliness !  
I looked into his eyes for thoughts. I saw  
The light which burnt erewhile, so brightly then,  
Quite gone. All left of him on the erring earth  
Was soulless dust. I passed, not needed there,  
The doors of morning. Isabelle, his wife,  
Hung o'er him—how, I tell not.

“ The gay morn

Had dawned. The white mist lay like drapery  
Upon the broad and beauteous river. Low  
I' the east the morning star shone out. On the ear  
Of morn no pilgrim voice arose. The winds  
Slept in the woods, the matin-bird i' the bower.  
The glittering dew engrained the robes of earth  
With pearls and diamonds. Earth seemed not  
like earth,  
Perchance seemed not, because my thoughts were all  
With him who had gone from it."

This the end

Of Albert's dream, by the devout and aged man ;  
Nor left he aught untold, of that told him,  
On the morn Albert expired. This is the end !

It seemed like revelation new ; and lit  
With brighter light the mystery of souls  
And angels. As a star new launched in space  
Casts radiance o'er new passes in the sky,  
So would that dream pursue me with its power,  
Until I felt its memory ne'er would die,  
Unless I dying !

As I went my way,  
Nor ever saw them more—before me rose



The scenes : around me seemed the worlds to  
breathe

Of that strange pair, of whom, immortal one,  
Mortal awhile the other, and in part,  
Not wholly : as one on the threshold stands,  
Between two worlds, a foot on either side,  
Of neither, yet partaking some of both.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

1. The first group of people who are interested in the results of the study are the researchers themselves. They want to know if the study was successful in achieving its objectives and if the results are consistent with their expectations.

1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 26

# THE GUARDIAN ANGEL.

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## BOOK THIRD.

MY native land I visited, when years  
Thrice seven had flown o'er earth, as spirits fly  
Which leave their memories o'er all their track,  
And live forever. Oft on ocean's vast  
And trackless path, at midnight hour, when winds  
Flew round us, lighting on the shrouds and sails,  
Or "took the ruffian billows by their tops,"  
And dashed them o'er the shuddering prow, I  
thought  
Of that lone ship in peril, ages past,  
To which an angel came, a messenger,  
The hope of the ship's crew ; 'twixt Crete midway  
And rocky Melita, with words of cheer  
To Rome's apostle.

Twelve long days and nights,

Since on my homeward voyage I did sail,  
Had reckoned up their hours, when dawning morn  
Revealed the rocky shores of Erin green,  
In dark outline before us. Ere the night  
Came from her worlds beyond the sky, with all  
Her starry retinue, the northern shores  
Of that wild isle, the Mull of dark Kintyre,  
The lofty Arran, we had passed, and saw  
The glittering archipelago which lies  
In Clyde's broad Frith. Dumbarton's storied steep  
And castellated rock, against the sky  
Loomed up, like some angelic sentinel  
Guarding us, as all night we anchored lay  
Waiting the break of morn. There was no change  
Upon the scenery. The Frith, the isles,  
The sky, the clouds, the shores were still the same,  
As in the days gone by. The viewless wind  
In wantonness caressed me, as of old,  
When rapt in thoughts sublime a boy I stood,  
At morn and eve, upon those windy steeps  
Unaltered.—I, alone, of all things there,  
Was changed by Time's rude finger.

Once again

I stood, returned, upon the crowded wharves

Of the great city. No familiar face,  
No voice of kinsman, friend, or comrade old,  
Was there to greet me. In the grave they slept—  
Father and mother ; nor could I mine eyes  
From tears refrain. I felt as one who stands  
Amid the sepulchres of all his race,  
Himself the last survivor, all his thoughts  
Reflected only to the shadowy past—  
But all earth-scenes are fleeting, so the thoughts  
That form and vivify the mind within.

Pass we my visit to the scenes of old,  
Familiar and beloved ; the roof which saw  
My birth-hour ; the green vales and hills of mist  
Dear to my boyhood,—pass the pilgrimage  
To my dear parents' grave—that duty dear ;  
Pass we my steps through places known to fame,  
Palace, or prison, consecrated church,  
Or castellated keep, or breezy downs,  
Where erst embattled armies, face to face  
Encountering, shocked, and Scotland wept or sung  
Their slaughter, or their glory ; Bannockburn  
And Bruce's might, or Flodden's fatal field,  
Where all the forest flowers were wede away ;

These pass we—they are sung by loftier harps,  
By hearts with heavenly genius more inflamed ;  
But not with patriot love more filled than mine.

At length—nor where, nor how, it needs not tell :  
Suffice it that the scene, the place, the time  
Fitted the unsought occasion—once again  
We met—strange meeting—Isabelle and I ;  
Young Isabelle, the wife of him who died  
On the far Mississippi, with whose fate  
Connection I had held so manifold,  
So multiform ; as known to who thus far  
The lingering mazes of my devious strain  
Have followed patient.

Isabelle was here,  
Who o'er the sea had voyaged, to behold  
The natal land of him, late gone to Heaven ;  
And memories common to us both, and strong  
As links of steel, compelled us, each to each  
To commune of the past.

We sat us down  
Upon a rustic seat, o'erlooking wide  
The Firth of Forth, with all its isles and shores,

Its trees, towers, hills, and skimming white-sailed  
barks.

Then—nor was't strange, for who with dreams so  
much

Had busied been—dreams mingling with our lives,

And, it may be, presaging life to come—

We spoke of visions, and she told me this,

Her dream of yesternight :

“ In thought I stood

Upon a distant star, the universe

Outspread beneath my vision, clear as day.

I' the centre of his worlds sat the great sun,

And still he filled their emptying urns with years.

He was the torch which lighted them, the fire

Which heated them, the fount from which their sky

Drank all its blue, the earth her green, and all

The flowers their witchery of dies. The stars,

Like showers of glory from some mass

Of nebulous light outshot, through boundless space,

Too populous and emulous of growth—

Arcturus and Orion, and the Seven,

The Pleiades, and the chambers of the south—

Were there, as fresh as when Job saw them shine

Three thousand years ago ; and the morning star,

Which rapt Isaiah's harp, by angel's hands  
Attuned to immortality, hath given.

While thus I saw the myriad rounded spheres  
Run through the universe, like cars of gold,  
Methought I felt the presences divine  
Of spiritual beings. Then beheld  
Hard by two spirits, marvelling as I  
To see their glory ; this of earth—of heaven,  
Angelic, showed the other.

“ Wherefore sail  
These stars the Empyrean ? ” questioned he  
Who less than angel seemed. “ Be these the ships  
Celestial, on the sea of time afloat  
Toward shores eternal ?—or immortal fanes,  
Dwellings and tabernacles, for repose  
Of angels, on their voyagings divine ?  
Whence, whither, and how long ? ”

Ere yet reply

Vouchsafed was, a change came o'er the scene :  
The stars set instant ; all was night and gloom.  
Then, as when morning light relumes the east,  
The earth alone I saw. Then as a ship  
First on the horizon seen, at early morn



By who from some tall Pharos scans the sea,  
Nigh lifts itself, nigh and nigher, and becomes  
More palpable, tili all its spars and sails,  
And smallest rigging show minute and clear.  
So did the earth approach, nor long the time  
Or ere I marked its rocky shores distinct,  
Barring the entrance of its surfy seas :  
Its hills, its vales, its rivers, lakes and streams ;  
Its quiet hamlets, and its royal towns,  
All sleeping in the sun, like cradled babes  
Rocked by the mother's hand. I heard the rush  
Of cataracts, down leaping from the hills,  
Parents of rivers—saw the upland tarns  
Lie in their misty mountain homes asleep :  
The world was rising from its couch of night,  
To pay its orisons to the uprisen sun.

While gazing thus upon the beauteous earth,  
More beauteous than it ever seemed before,  
Again the scene was shifted, and I saw  
An avenue revealed, connecting earth  
And heaven. Nor knew I till that dreaming hour  
Such avenue there was. Long, broad and steep,  
From star to star, through boundless space it rose,

Surpassing all the human mind can frame,  
Of vastness or of beauty. Giant trees  
Shading its streets ; fountains murmured by  
Cooling its precincts. Hierarchies bright  
Its pleasant paths innumerable clomb,  
Filling its way with glory. The great gate  
Wide open stood, and by it stood, in hosts,  
Attendant angels, waiting who should come,  
In heaven expected, yet delayed on earth.

While wondering at this avenue, and all  
The heavenly pomp assembled there, I saw  
A human soul, and guardian angel, stand  
Before the guarded portals of the gate,  
Seeking admittance of th' angelic host,  
To that their heavenward pass. Whereat arose  
Loud shouts of cherubim and seraphim  
To hail their advent. That triumphant joy  
Ceased, and a fiery chariot them up took,  
And bore them high, that heavenly road along,  
In pomp and grandeur, such as ne'er beheld  
Mind mortal, nor imagined. Vaster far  
That chariot, and more glorious than the blaze  
Of the great sun, escorted by all stars,

Made pilgrimage from earth up to the gates  
Of Beula. Hosts that avenue along,  
Angelic, veiled their crowns and shouted hymns  
The while that chariot passed. Methought I  
heard

The rapturous pæans of innumerable souls  
High up the heavenly hills, as they beheld  
The entering pageant and the chariot wheels,  
Which bore a soul to everlasting bliss.  
The noise of trumpets filled the air. The peals  
Of the great organ of eternity,  
The music of ten thousand holy harps,  
The voices of angelic minstrels, swelled  
The wondrous diapason. As the pair  
Entered the thunderous vestibules of heaven,  
A film dropped from my eyes, and instantly  
I knew the soul, it was *his* soul, my own  
Departed husband's, on its way to God,  
By him led forward, who his every step  
On earth had known, and lighted all his ways—  
His Guardian Angel.

Here again my dream  
Was changed ; an angel came to me and cried—  
“ Look, mortal, on the earth once more.”

I looked,  
And saw the Mississippi covered once again  
With the white mists of morn. Upon its banks  
Arose the dwelling of my happy youth,  
Gathered around it vast angelic hosts.  
The chamber of my dying husband came  
Before me, and myself embracing him,  
Himself no longer. Little thought I then  
Angelic eyes pitied my grief.

“A world there is.”

The angel spake again to me. Said he :  
“A world of God nearer to earth, and filled  
With beings ruined, and for ever doomed  
To woe !—which seen, will give to understand  
God’s justice and God’s mercy, and to judge  
The insane blindness of the fools who rush  
Heedless of what He promises, to grasp  
Empty fruition of the lusts which war  
Against the soul, and for the joys of time  
Barter immortal bliss and glorious life  
Among the seraphim ; preferring wrath,  
And wailing in the abyss, and gnashing teeth,  
Delivered to the worm that dieth not.”

His hand he waved, and lo ! before me stood  
The star-light Hell ! Like exhalation dire,  
It rose and stood before me, looming up,  
Dread, horrible, infernal ! most unlike  
All save itself, of worlds. No hills it had  
Nor mountain range, nor sea, nor glassy lake,  
Nor murmuring rivulets, nor forests old.  
No breath of evening zephyrs, or soft airs,  
No winds. No sun it had, nor silver moon,  
No gentle stars i' the empyrean sky.  
No city, citadel, or tower, or wall :  
No fairy palaces, nor grove, nor lawn.  
No white-sailed ships on seas, no shallows frail  
Of fairy form, on winding rivers hid,  
Away in mountain fastnesses. No haunts  
To be revisited, no travellers young  
Or old, upon its coasts, come from far lands  
To muse. There were no green, historic scenes  
To see and love. Like cities in our dreams,  
Deserted of all traffic, so was it  
Without one mart of business, or exchange  
Within, for all the merchants of a world  
To congregate. No science and no art  
Saw I therein. No harp, no statuary,

No portraiture of things most fair, beheld  
In other worlds of God. No Sabbath day  
Came there, no Mercy-seat, where weary souls  
Worn out could kneel. No sanctuary where praise  
And prayer, and truth eterne, and sacraments  
Delight the entranced worshipper. None was  
Who prayed or praised, in all that world, not one !  
Nor book, nor scripture soothed, nor armed the soul  
With gems of human genius, truths divine.  
Greetings were none, though aged forms I saw,  
And youthful forms in human beauty clad.  
No home was there, no moonlight trysting tree :  
No smiles of youthful love ! no glances sweet  
And soft at meetings, as on earth ; nor looks  
Of hope, nor tears of joy, nor reveries  
Of blessedness.

How long I gazing stood  
I know not, ne'er can know, but long enough  
To show me that there came no days, no weeks,  
No months, no years, no time, in that dread place.  
Cycles on cycles ceaseless rolled, unknown  
Around the beach of that forgotten star,  
For all forgot it seemed of God, so drear  
It was ; and full of everlasting woe !

Like monuments of agony and death,  
I saw the ruined angels stand, their crowns  
All smouldering with slow, eternal fires,  
Watching the billows burning, of that flood  
Which ever dashed against the battlements  
Of that lone star, like seared and scorched pines,  
Erewhile beheld, upon earth's mountain-tops  
By forest conflagration fired, they stood.  
Far off, in the interior, saw I more,  
And beyond, the agonies untold,  
The blackened forms of beings wailing there  
In utter desolation. Memory  
And thought alone were left them. Nor in all,  
Far as my eye could scan, was aught which showed  
The sacred, sweet relationships of earth,  
Of husband, spouse, of parent, child. No love  
Of brother, sister, lover, friend. It was  
A world wherein to dwell, the passing thought  
Appalled the loaded fancy with all forms  
Of hideousness and horror. Yet its gates  
Wide open stood, and thronged with those who  
    come,  
Blind to its terrors, down the slanting way,  
Betrayed and lost. Most horrible it was,

Nor can I now, without hot flow of tears  
Describe it, and the hopeless dwellers there,  
Did not the angel words high elevate  
My thoughts, to leave all fears of it behind.

Fast as it had arisen it passed away.  
His hand the angel moved, and it was gone.  
This, too, he said : “ Thy husband never saw  
That ruined world and its inhabitants.  
It is not near the avenue to bliss,  
But far below the earth on its confines ;  
And far enough from every other world  
To hide all knowledge of its agony  
Within its own dire battlements of woe !

As when we pass from sights most desolate  
On earth, to scenes of loveliness and joy  
And blessedness supreme ; so in my dream  
The star of woe and horror floated by,  
And sights of bliss came o’er the changed scene.  
The glorious road between the earth and sky,  
Like rainbow of surpassing pomp and size ;  
And all along its arch, the chariot wheels  
Of angels and transfigured souls rolled on,



As if an envoy of great import. Bright  
The vestibules of heaven shone out, and all  
Its walls and towers. Rejoicings full and grand  
Enchoired with angel trump and harp and song,  
Resounded from within the battlements  
Of bliss, as if a nation of the earth  
From tyranny set free.

Anon methought

I stood within the gates, upon a tower  
Surpassing all earth's towers for altitude,  
Which amplest prospect gave ; and saw the  
mount

Of God, set in the vale of heaven, begirt  
With the glittering, glorious, crystal, waveless sea.  
High on its top the Mediatorial Throne,  
Whiter than light, stood up, and overlooked  
The universe. Steps rose to it on steps,  
Lit with seven mystic burning lamps. It stood,  
The centre of all sovereignty in heaven.

One with the likeness of a man sat there :  
Upon his head were many crowns, and all  
I knew, but chiefest knew, the coronet  
Of mercy ; brightest was its sheen. Threefold—

Of the prophets, priests and kings combined. The  
bow

Of sovereign grace suspended, hung o'erhead,  
Spanning the throne triumphal—arch it hung  
Majestical, sublime. On one side blazed  
These words terrific : “ A consuming fire  
Is our God ”—on the other, writ alike  
In everlasting flame—“ Our God is love.”  
From underneath the throne a river flowed  
Of crystal, round the mount and in the sea,  
The everlasting sea, discharged its flood—  
The river which the psalmist saith “ makes glad  
For aye, the city of our God.”

How long

On the white throne, and Him who sat on it,  
I gazed, there was no horologe to tell.  
But ne'er shall I forget the mystery  
Of God in Christ, then oped to me. Then thoughts  
Before me passed, so luminous and grand ;  
That I must be an angel and ascend  
The heights of the invisible, and put on  
The spirit state to give them glory enough  
In utterance.

Anon, another view

Of God's high mount was shown to me. I thought  
I saw it covered with transfigured souls,  
An angel host. If all the trees of earth's  
Vast forests came ; if all earth's buried dead  
Came forth ; if all the silver stars create,  
Together stood, all o'er the mountain ridge,  
Amid the valley of Eternity,  
'Twould be to that great congregation less  
Than shell or pebble on the spreading strand  
To all the worlds compared, which God first made,  
What time he brooded over chaos dark  
And shapeless.

O'er that congregation reigned  
Silence profound, mysterious, deep and dread.  
I heard no harp of angel, or of soul ;  
No wing of seraphim cleave the air, in haste  
Returning or departing. Speechless stood  
All these, as if in awful worship wrapt  
Adoring mercy. While I sought to know  
The cause of such assemblage round the throne,  
And turned to ask mine angel—" Hold," he said ;  
" Look to the steps of the white throne."

I looked,

And instantly I saw my husband's soul

With his attendant angel, coming forth  
From judgment. Never can I cease to see,  
While memory lives, his mien, his gait, his air.  
Diviner and more Godlike he appeared  
Than when I saw him travelling up to bliss  
In the angelic chariot, on the road  
So glorious. Like a minstrel king he came,  
A crown upon his head, and in his hand  
A harp. I heard his voice of music chant  
A strain, surpassing all earth canticles  
In pathos and sublimity. His steps  
I saw by angels tended—ministries  
Ordained of God, angelic people they,  
And older than the living sun or stars ;  
Yet young and beautiful with holiness.  
Innumerable souls I saw approaching him  
On every side, to welcome, and to hail  
His coming. Some I saw distinct and clear.  
Their faces oft had passed me in the ways  
Of earth ; and not a few, the likeness bare  
Of beings I had known, but long since fled  
From Time's grave-trenched coasts. They had  
the air  
Of mortals, and the countenance ; for souls

Retain the outlines of their body, all  
Transfigured and ennobled. Then I saw  
Before the mount of judgment, where he walked,  
A vast infinitude of scenery spread,  
The scenery of the great domain of heaven.  
It seemed a land of natural terraces :  
Of green-capped hills, of winding lakes, where ran  
Meandering streams : of trees umbrageous, tall  
And beautiful, as the fair tree of life  
In Eden. Waterfalls were there, and crystal lakes,  
And forests, such as earth ne'er owned e'en when  
All young, and new create ; and fairy nooks  
Inviting souls and angels in ; and bowers  
Of peaceful, living, endless, holy bliss.  
I saw no grave mound rise in it, nor heard  
The wail of orphanage or widowhood.  
Where'er I looked, the robe of holiness  
Lay over it like a glory spread across  
The face of beauty. All was blessedness.  
Its music made me strong. The air, the light,  
The sounds, the people, and the place, bespoke  
The holy citadel, and garden of God.  
I knew the while I dreamed, and dreaming saw  
Not heaven itself, but the symbolic views

Of heaven, befitting the earthborn dreamer. Here  
A change came o'er me, and again the scene  
Was changed.

I heard the Guardian Angel speak  
To my Lord's soul ; and saw his finger point  
On to the Orient. Instant at the sign  
They both spread out their ample wings and soared  
The empyrean. On they sailed like barks  
Upon a summer sea. I too was borne  
Away, and followed them. The angel form  
Who guided me went too, nor word the while  
Spake he. At last I saw them both alight  
Upon a lofty mountain-top. At first,  
Methought a veil of mist its summit hid ;  
But as I looked, I saw its cliffs distinct.  
'Twas granted me to reach another peak  
Short space from that, whereon his soul  
Went up to the o'erlooking heights, which rose  
Tower-like, amid a boundless plain. The heights  
The Guardian Angel first ascended, both  
Stood there, like travellers, to mine eyes, gone up  
For observation wide.

There was a tree,  
A solitary tree upon the top :

Such tree could find no soil on earth to give  
It nutriment, and roots far reaching. Tall,  
Umbrageous, laded full with fruit divine.  
Two vacant thrones stood underneath its boughs,  
There sat they down, my husband's glorious soul,  
And his attendant Guardian Angel. Both  
Like sovereign kings appeared, who took survey  
Of some vast empire which conjoint they ruled ;  
And now from noontide travel sat them down  
For calm repose, yet took not off their crowns  
Of glory.

The long rays which kissed the place,  
And all the scenes outspread below were bright,  
Brighter than all light else, beheld erewhile.  
My ministering angel whispering, said :  
“ That is prophetic light, which showed the seers  
Of olden time, remote futurity.”  
From off the battlements on which I stood,  
I saw distinct two vast mysterious seas,  
On which my husband looked. The angel turned  
His eyes and thoughts to them. To the Orient,  
one—

The other toward the Occident, was spread  
Boundless. Upon the Orient strand I saw

The aged Past walk sorrowful, and old.  
As thick as hulks of stranded argosies  
On earth's black rocks, lay worn-out empires, rent  
And desolate. Among the drifting rack  
Floated the blighted hopes and schemes of Time.  
No more I saw of that. But turning, saw  
The ocean of the Future, and beyond,  
The tops of distant ages from afar,  
Like full-rigged ships come up. Along the shores  
Shone lights, most faint the farthest, but all bright,  
All moving onward. In the future skies  
Shone moons and stars, awaiting destinies  
Unknown to me.

Far out into the waves  
Of that futurity, before mine eyes,  
A promontory of the mountain, rose  
That cape far-reaching. Next the royal pair  
Seemed to discourse. Upon its jutting ridge  
Myriads of shapes angelic they beheld.  
Their eyes were turned from looking far away  
Into the distant future, for events  
Foretold them on the first blest Sabbath night  
Of time, whereon first was revealed to them  
God's scheme of mercy. Leave they asked, that night,



To look into the mystery sublime,  
And mark the sign of its approach. Nor once  
Had they that post deserted, spying thence  
The wondrous secret of Eternity :  
And well had it repaired their large desire.

As one who travels oft in dreamland knows—  
I had another vision.

In the air

Methought I sailed, like a young star of hope.  
Beside me sailed my angel. It was day,  
A summer day most beautiful to see.  
Below me lay an island in the sea  
Of crystal girdled. Circular it lay,  
Pyramidal in height, and terraced all,  
From base to summit. Traversed everywhere,  
By avenues of beauty. Trees superb,  
Of every form, and flowers of fairest hue  
Garnished its shores. Its waterfalls and rills ;  
Its glens, its arched chasms and battlements,  
Seemed all ethereal. Music too, was there,  
And minstrelsy o' sweetness, softer than  
That heard upon the mount of God. It came  
Up in mine ears, like the seraphic tones

Of pilgrim spirit, sitting at the close  
Of day upon the forest edge, who breathes  
Upon his flute a roundelay of love.  
This islet in the crystal sea, this isle  
Of infants, marvellous gathering had of souls,  
Of infant spirits, innumerable, and past  
All numbers, brought together on the earth.  
I saw some sitting on the jutting rocks,  
Contemplating the waterfalls : some up  
The grassy slopes ascending ; some beneath  
The palms and cedars lying, in converse  
Divine : some sang the odes and songs of bliss :  
Some thrilled their strings of gold—no sorrow there !  
No tear-drop fell ! no word of strife ! no look  
Of fear ! no wish unsatisfied was there !  
For every wish was holy. Each young soul  
Its Guardian Angel had. Immortal, too,  
Were they :—nor death, nor grave, nor sin came  
nigh.

Great jubilee it was, of infant souls  
Assembled there. While gazing thus, I hung  
In air. It seemed as if I floated near  
The top of this all-beauteous isle, and saw  
My husband and his angel standing there.

Such narrative stirred to its secret depths  
My memories of Anna, Mary, James—  
The lilies God had called of late, from those,  
The flowers of love, which in my garden grew.  
Then questioned I, if in that isle o' the sea,  
My treasures lost, yet not lost quite, since Hope  
Whispered reunion, she beheld.

“ Them there

I saw,” she answered, “ all the three : I saw  
Them, side by side, upon the topmost hill,  
O'erlooking all the isle ; and, them beside,  
Their Guardian Angels, sleepless vigil keeping.  
I had no power to speak, nor they to hear,  
If I had spoken. In their eyes, agaze  
On spiritual glory, earthly sights  
Wake no emotions :—nor 'tis ours to know  
The secrets of Eternity, forbid  
To mortal comprehension—only this  
I saw, that *there* they were, and in that state  
Serenely happy, as God's angels are.”

The dream went onward, like a mountain rill  
Which leaps o'er cataracts ; now by the pool  
Beneath a moment lingers, wheeling then

Around some jutting rock, its current hides  
In subterranean channels, but anon,  
Emerges in the green and spreading plain—  
Nor stops again till it beholds the sea,  
And goes with it, made one, around the shores  
Of earth. Me onward thus, my wondrous dream,  
Through heaven, led devious, till, in thought I stood  
Upon another mountain. Altitude  
On altitude, most high, before me rose  
In one vast semiarch. The conelike heights  
Were beautiful exceedingly, and white  
With glory. Alpine travellers often catch  
Such view, through gorges in the frozen top  
Of mountains, which o'erlook the wide champaign.  
On every pinnacle stood human souls,  
Surveying the Empyrean, through the glass  
Of God.

While gazing thus on spectacle  
So grand, my angel whispered in mine ear—  
“That is the Synod of God’s seers, who saw  
Erewhile the future, and its mysteries,  
Oped to the less inspired, who never stood  
Upon the mount of Vision. Year by year,  
They seek these mountain fastnesses, to spy

The advent of their prophecies."

At this

My memory recalled their utterances  
Divine and marvellous. I scarce refrained  
From chanting their inspired canticles.  
O ! past all limning was this glorious dream  
Of the earth-seers. High up the highest peak  
Of the great central height, I saw distinct  
What seemed the mystic ladder, which was seen  
Of olden time, with hierarchies all white,  
Ascending and descending.

As the dream

Shifted and changed, I saw upon the vale,  
Contemplating the vision grand, the soul  
Of my dear lord, and his attendant guide.  
The angel held converse with him the while,  
And oft his right hand lifted, as to point  
Some chiefest of the watchers, but no word  
Fell on my listening ear.

Next came this scene,

Before my dreaming mind. I seemed to stand  
Upon the battlements of a bright star,  
That floated in the firmament serene,  
Whence I could see the whole circumference

Of central heaven. Like some city vast,  
Crowded and populous, angelic forms,  
And souls of earth, innumerable, I saw :  
Nor ever saw such blessedness before.  
The vast assemblage was, by tidings stirred,  
Replete with joy divine : as when the trees  
Of a great forest shake their weighty boughs,  
And bow their lofty tops, when winds let loose  
Fleet over them,—so moved their multitude.  
Some stood in groups conversing, some aloof  
In bowers sat, half withdrawn, and waked their  
    harps  
To sweetest harmonies ; with outspread wings,  
Some swept the Empyrean, fleet as thought,  
Heaven's messengers. That was no common joy,  
No calm and tranquil bliss, whose witchery  
Is felt on earth, when lovers meet in bowers ;  
But ecstasies celestial and extreme,  
As when a sire embraces his lost son  
Returned from error's gloomy wilderness ;  
Or maiden fair, her lover, exiled long  
From youthful haunts come back, with laurel green  
Of fame around his forehead. Greater e'en  
Than these, and more triumphant, rapturous,

And full of inspiration, was the joy  
Of angels, seraphs, principalities,  
And powers, and souls rejoicing. Fountains rose  
Of blessedness o'er all the plain of heaven.  
It seemed the everlasting and abundant urn  
Of God, set up ere angels were create,  
I' the dawning of the past eternity,  
Had new o'erflowings.

While I silent gazed  
On this celestial jubilee, the cause  
Unable to divine, these words I heard  
Proclaimed—"The lost is found. The lost is found.  
The lost is found." The angels standing near  
The stream of life cried out : the human souls  
On every mountain-top, and valley green  
Of bliss, took up the joyful cry : the winds  
From every quarter of the heavens flew forth,  
And audibly pronounced the words—"The lost  
Is found." The angels floating in the midst  
Of the Empyrean shouted louder still  
The words. The echoes of Eternity  
Replied—"The lost is found." Methought I heard  
The voices of the angels on the earth  
Calling aloud up to the heaven of heavens—

“The lost is found.”

While wondering at this scene  
And holy tumult, soft mine angel spoke  
To me, and said : “Thy native earth-world gives  
This joy to heaven. Look down to the earth-scene  
Which moveth the celestial dignities,  
And holy ones, translated.”

Instantly,  
Earth came and stood before me. It was night  
Upon the coasts of earth, the noon of night—  
The silver moonlight showed a quiet vale  
Afar, amid the forest solitude.  
A babbling, noisy little brook ran there,  
Glittering beneath the moonlight clear. Just where  
The rivulet emerged from a ravine,  
By tall trees hidden, stood a cottage lone,  
With wild vines twined around it, ruinous  
And old. Faint through its crevices I saw  
One taper’s sickly glimmer.

Suddenly  
A light more dazzling and more beautiful  
Than moonbeams, flooded this earth-scene, and  
straight  
The dazzling forms of mighty angels stood



Around the cottage walls. Intensely clear  
Their waiting chariots shone. No mortal form  
Was visible in all that solemn place,  
Fitted to be the vestibule divine  
Of inner heaven, so glorious was it made  
By those bright guests.

Another change o'er passed—

I stood within the cottage door ; nor there  
Alone, for angels also were within,  
Ministering to an aged man, who lay  
Upon a bed of leaves a-dying—old,  
With worn and wrinkled brow, and scalp all bare.  
No mortal watched his couch of death : alone  
He lay, not seeing, hearing not, that concourse  
    bright  
Which made his solitude a crowded court.  
He prayed, and through my soul his words of prayer  
Passed like an arrow, cleaving the blue air,  
Instinct, and piercing with divinest hope  
And faith.

This much I learned from his converse  
With God : that in his youth he strayed diverse  
From Virtue's peaceful, holy way, serene ;  
Spurning the fragrant blossoms which were there,

On every tree and flower. Like one borne on  
Through deserts desolate and devious : dark  
And pleasureless, he wandered on and on  
In sin. From beetling precipices fell  
To deeper gulfs. Nor stopped he once to think,  
To list for warning voices from without,  
Or for that one within. Nor paused he e'en  
When the Death Angel took his holy sire  
And mother from the earth : nor when gray hairs  
And vision dim warned him of coming age.  
His supplication shook his shrivelled form,  
Like lonely tree upon a mountain-top,  
By wintry wind assailed. His penitence  
So thrilled me, that from weeping held I not.  
Meanwhile the angels moved not, who were there,  
But listed to his prayer, as witnesses  
From God.

A change came o'er the scene. Methought  
I was translated back again to bliss,  
When I could hear distinct, and feel the joy  
Of the rejoicers. As we flew to heaven,  
Mine angel talked with me, as friend with friend,  
And said : " God's mercy found the aged man,  
As he stood toppling on the precipice

Of time, o'erchanging hell ; and like a ship  
Safe moored in quiet bay, where no storms rage,  
Now finds he anchorage in the clear sea  
Of God's electing love, no more to drift  
Amid the breakers of a sinful life ; and hence  
These songs, and grand rejoicings, filled the bounds  
Of heaven, what time the herald angels came  
With news of his repentance, fresh from earth."

Nor more I heard, for I espied the soul  
Of him I loved, and his tall angel stand  
Amid the dream, contemplating the scene  
Of this repenting sinner.

Suddenly

I was borne on, my angel with me flew.  
The region which I passed was like a land  
Where mists obscure and change the scenery.  
We lighted in a valley 'mid the hills,  
Gorgeous with manifold flowers, unlike the blooms  
Of earth, and verdurous with unearthly greens,  
And cooled with liquid lapse of rivers clear,  
Such as man's eye ne'er saw, since were shut out  
The four immortal floods of Paradise.  
That ever present pair were present still.

And here mine angel said : “ The vale behold  
Of thoughts and fancies. Thoughts are these  
trees all,  
Thoughts all these flowers. Ideas grow for aye,  
In this enchanted place.”

I answered him,  
And said : “ I know that God sowed all the  
thoughts  
Of all his worlds ; but never dreamed of place  
Where fancies grow like flowers, and trees of earth,  
And thoughts flow like earth’s rivers, but more  
bright  
As from diviner founts, themselves divine,  
With mirrored gleams of ever-living bliss.”

At this, he put into my hand of flesh  
A cluster of these thoughts, which he had plucked  
From the umbrageous tree, whose branches fair  
Spread overhead, and bade me taste.

’Twas sweet  
To taste, and instantly I felt my mind  
Uprise, far-sighted, as the eagle borne  
Amid the Empyrean. Earth was gone,  
And all things earthly. Bodiless, all soul,

I seemed to hang in highest pride of place,  
Where every thing was seen, and known, and felt.  
I saw the secrets of the universe  
Lie open. I saw the planets ride the fields  
Of space, like charioteers, or white-winged ships  
Earth's oceans sailing. First like myriad sparks  
They rode the firmament ; but as I gazed,  
I knew them for the suns and stars of space  
Which I had often seen, in the night skies  
Of earth, diminished to my human ken  
By distance, now revealed distinct and broad  
In their true lustre and colossal size.  
But still from these it came not, the great light  
Which flooded all, as from one central source,  
With living glory. Not the glory of the sun,  
Or moon, or planet, which have each their own  
Particular effulgence, but unknown  
From whence it came, mystic, and full of awe.  
Gazing on these, high o'er the horizon's rim,  
Methought a huge gigantic wheel arose,  
Instinct with eyes, whence flowed that light sublime,  
Which saw at once all corners of all space,  
Naught hidden from their world-pervading ken.  
Slowly it rolled towards me through the fields

Of space. Spoke after spoke I saw arise  
And then descend. Epochs and eras hung  
With great events ; and in its track behind  
The destinies of all the worlds of God.

Brighter it shone, and brighter, as it neared ;  
So that I saw the dread futurities  
Of all created things, revolving grow  
On every revolution, thick as leaves  
Upon the trees of earth. There was no world  
In all the universe, whose destiny  
Its vast gyrations did not roll along,  
As on and on it rolled, with angel throngs  
Around it ministering. Mine eyes observed,  
What till that moment unobserved was,  
A mighty spirit in the centre stand,  
Who gave it motion—motion evermore !

I knew the wheel of Providence, which ne'er  
Had stood an instant still since endless space,  
Endless eternity, and God alone  
Had being—nor would stop for evermore :  
Nor turn aside, nor backward, but sweep on  
Ever and ever, by the will propelled

Of Him who ordered it, in shape displayed  
Of spiritual guide its course to rule,  
Subordinate to that eternal scheme  
Predestinate of Mercy, that all worlds  
Should know its triumphs, and confess the plan  
Of Justice made complete, but quenched in Grace !

Voices now fell upon my ear. “ Whence came  
These words ? ” I asked mine angel.

He replied :

“ That is the martyr cry, heard at this hour  
Each day before the throne. The martyred souls  
Appear, an awful multitude, each eve  
Before the veiled mountain of the Lord,  
When the white throne offers access to all,  
And cry—‘ How long, O Lord ?—How long, O  
Lord ?—

How long, O Lord ? till vengeance girdeth on  
His sword, and goeth down to vindicate  
Our wrongs on earth ? ’ When silence hath ensued,  
No voice replying to them from the throne,  
They take departure to their ministries  
Remote, and come again at the set hour  
Ordained for their renewing aye their cry.

If thou couldst listen here to-morrow eve  
Again, thine ear would catch their martyr cry."

The voice had ceased ; and as they silent stood  
Awaiting answer from the throne, the dream  
Showed me a mountain rise grand as the Alps,  
And like them too, with turrets high, all filled  
With martyrs. Vast they seemed as army, past  
Enumeration. Beautiful their robes  
And coronets gleamed out. As rapt I stood  
Beholding them, my angel said : " Anon  
Thou wilt converse with them, and know each one."  
Then lifting up his hand, he pointed out  
The British martyrs, as one only could  
Who with them was in fellowship conjoined.  
He showed me those of Bladenock ; then those  
Of Ayrsmoss, Pentland Hills, Lochgoin,  
Of Galloway, of Glasgow, Irvine, Ayr,  
Of Edinburgh, Saint Andrews.

Nor heard I,  
Nor saw more of them, for even then, aloft,  
Upon the highest pinnacles of all,  
Above that semicirque of towering hills,  
I saw my husband and his angel stand.



Like scenes in some earth-drama, so my dream  
Changed ever. How the soul can pass from place  
To place remote, in dreams, the mind of man  
Hath not to know. But now, methought I walked  
Amid the Paradise of angels, where  
My guide led me. The scenery divine  
Surpassed the Paradise of souls. Perchance  
I only saw the suburbs of the land,  
Where ransomed spirits from the earth abide.  
All over it triumphal arches rose,  
Colossal, sculptured, white, most beautiful  
To see. The everlasting trees were there,  
Erect, umbrageous, high ; and underneath  
Their branches groups of angels stood, and traced  
The mysteries inscribed on the arches grand.  
I saw the tree of life, but I forgot  
To taste its fruit—oh strange forgetfulness !  
For I could then have passed secure alway  
At pleasure, through the Vale of Death, to see  
The disembodied, whom I love.

There were  
No broken columns there, no torches wrought  
On pyramid or obelisk : no urns  
To tell of ashes there enclosed, once shrines

Of human souls. There was no type of death  
In all the place.

But now, mine angel guide  
Paused suddenly, and said : “ Behold yon arch,  
Erect to the creation ; angels all  
Affirm they found it standing there, what time  
New made, they entered hither, while God’s word  
By which they were create, first in their ears  
Resounded. Over it was carved distinct  
The universe ; but ere I took in all  
Its beauty and design, it passed away ;  
Or I passed from it, and another rose,  
Of structure more sublime, mine eyes before—  
The grand memorial of the Mercy scheme.  
Columns on columns rose, immense its span,  
And vast the avenue it overhung,  
Through which God’s chariots all abreast might  
drive ;  
And all the souls of man create, or yet  
To be created. Nor alone it stood,  
Nor far aloof from it its sister arc  
Rose, beautiful with carven hieroglyphs  
Forewrought : around it myriads of bright souls  
Hung joyful.

This, the angel said, "I saw  
Arise, what time the primal Sabbath day  
Was ended. All the unnumbered angels  
To build it up. 'Tis dedicate by God  
To earth's own Sabbath-day."

                                    As feather borne  
Upon the air, so easily I moved  
From scene to scene. Methought the angels all,  
Who travelled there, saw me with eyne surprised,  
For all were spirits, saving only I ;  
And each saluted me with reverence  
Profound and fitting.

                                    Suddenly again  
Mine angel paused, and thus outspoke he clear,  
Pointing an amaranth ensculptured group  
Of figures, resting on a pedestal  
High o'er my head. Recent, the scene portrayed,  
In this surpassing statuary. He said :  
" Full many scenes has earth like this, but heaven  
This only, nor this even, save that here  
Admiring angels wrought it from the life,  
And set it up in Paradise, ablaze  
With adamant and topaz."

                                    At the sight,

My heart was stirred to its profoundest deeps.  
A sculptured group it was, larger than life—  
A weary mother on her couch of straw,  
Worn out with ill-paid toil, asleep—with toil,  
Painfully borne, to win her children bread ;  
But ministering angels hovered near,  
Protecting them, while innocently slept  
The babes around that sad parent.

Next, I stood

Before the arc, erect to prayer. These words  
Engraved on it—"Prayer brings the human soul  
Into God's house of banqueting, and opes  
His treasures unto it."

Mine angel said :

"Man needeth prayer to perfect every grace,  
To sanctify afflictions, teachings, joys :  
Faith is its hand :—all men at death can pray.  
A sigh—a tear—a look—a thought—a word—  
Is prayer."

While yet he spoke, I felt myself  
Moving in silence up the avenue,  
So rich in trophies of aërial art.  
Again we paused, for here uprose the arc  
Triumphal, dedicate to holy love.

No structure ever was erect on earth  
So passing fair.

Three rounded vaults uprose,  
On columns high as heaven, all sculptured o'er  
With God's decrees. The angels builded it,  
What time the scheme of mercy was made known  
To them, and writ God's mystic sentences  
Thereon, that coming ages might behold  
His loving kindness unto men.

These words—

“Love is the eldest attribute o' God,”  
Alone I read, for mine angelic guide  
Addressed me, “'Mid the farthest ancient years,  
The everlasting cycles which had rolled  
Before creation was, Jehovah loved  
Thy race. Love was the password given to us,  
The angel family, when we audience sought  
Before the throne, that memorable hour  
We put on being.”

Only one sight more  
I saw in that angelic Paradise :  
The semblance of what had been, if on earth  
By human builders reared, of cedarn beams,  
And alabaster buttress, coigne and spire ;

But here of immaterial splendors, glories far  
Surpassing Grecian art, compact and tack :  
A vast cathedral, where all earth might come  
To worship. Worshippers I saw not there,  
Yet myriads of bright beings walked its isles,  
Or stood upon its towers, or waiting near,  
Gazed on its marvellous supernatural size,  
Its beauty and completeness.

“ What is here,  
O angel ! ” I inquired.

He answering, said :

“ The antitypal structure it is, forebuilt  
To the great work of truth—the Bible. There  
All nations of the earth may congregate  
To worship God, emblem divine and fit.  
The Bible offereth all the families  
Of man the grand redemption scheme. Oft here  
Thy disembodied soul anon will come,  
And ever find new mysteries set forth  
Herein.”

Nor more I heard, for I was borne  
Away to the encircling battlements  
Of bliss. As o'er the parapets I leaned  
Earthward, I saw angelic chariots ride

The mighty Empyrean. Thick as fleets  
Of argosies on summer seas they rode :  
Triumphantly the grand procession moved,  
With pomp of banners, trumpet-clang, and shouts  
Of myriads, who celestial welcome gave  
To those who upward soared, enrobed in light.

“ These,” cried my spirit guide—“ these are the  
souls

Elect, and the bonds redeemed of sin  
Upcoming from the earth, their mission there  
Completed, and their weary race all run,  
As warriors from the battle-field of time,  
Victorious and triumphant. Angels lead  
The way. God sends such retinues divine,  
To earth for holy souls, whene’er their lease  
Of years expires. No infant ever leaps  
From off the battlements of time, across  
The gulf of death, to these immortal coasts  
Of grand Eternity, unaided, lone :  
Angelic chariots bear them o’er, and aye  
They meet aërial couriers on the way  
To bliss, who welcome them, and join the throng  
Of the attendant hosts for them sent down,

Cheering them still with minstrelsy divine,  
And hymns celestial."

At the word he paused—

I looked, and saw my husband's spirit nigh,  
With that angelic presence at his side  
Approaching me. As soft his winning smile,  
And full and fond his darkly swimming eye,  
As tender his persuasive accents fell,  
Piercing my heart, as erst, when on the shores  
Of that old father of the southern floods,  
In buoyant youth and ecstasy divine.  
Of that strong passion which makes earth seem  
    heaven,  
We strayed, affianced.

Deep it pierced my heart,  
That murmured voice, whose every tone was love,  
Yet inarticulate of mortal words,  
And thrilling the perception of the soul,  
With silent utterances understood,  
But all unspoken. As the electric sense  
Of things forgotten long, which flash at once  
At striking of some casual chord, unknown,  
And unconnected with the thought it makes  
Upon the muser's spirit—so, it seemed,



His accents smote my heart, and told me all,  
All I had longed, had prayed, had striven to know  
Since he departed, though no human words  
Spoke to mine ear. They told me that—TRUE

LOVE

On earth is love in heaven—as Truth in time,  
E'en in eternity, be only truth.  
That as the soul survives, and bears aloft  
With the self-soul, self-consciousness—for else  
Reward and Pain were neither Penalty  
Nor Recompense, but states of woe or bliss,  
Casual, and independent of all else,  
Foreign or future—so must needs survive,  
And mount with it, aloft, that which it had,  
While working out its problem here below  
Of best, of purest, and of least terrene,  
Its clear affections and its hallowed loves,  
Permitted.

Then it seemed, around me grew  
In clear embrace, his pinions of broad light,  
Pressing me to his heart, whose every throb  
I counted, by its audible beat, and felt,  
In the pulsating rush of soul to soul,  
Too strong for poor humanity to bear.

Yet, in ecstasy of bliss me seemed,  
Fearing his sure departure—for I felt  
His spirit presence melting from my arms,  
As snow-wreaths in soft thaw-time. I cried out :  
“ Give me, beloved, give me, ere we part,  
Again to meet, before the natural time  
And consummation of this earthly life  
Shall make me, too, as thou immortal art,  
Give me the unspoken word, which spoken once  
Unlocks the barriers of the spiritual world,  
And lifts the mortal for a moment up  
With immortality commune to hold.”

Strange was his aspect as the words I spoke,  
Perchance too daring—as the full-orbed moon  
When misty vapors wavering o’er its face  
Obstruct its clear effulgence, and distort  
Its blessed influence, terrifying realms  
And purple tyrants, on their trembling thrones,  
With supernatural fear, portentous awe.  
But soon the gloom o’erpassed, and his own smile  
Kindled his face, and kissed his parting lips,  
As bending o’er me, nearer than before,  
He made as he would speak.

Oh that he had !

But in that rapture, all too great to bear,  
In that anticipation of the boon  
Never to mortal given, save, who saw  
The things apocalyptic ; and who rose  
Mortal, among the chariots and steeds  
Of Israel—I started—I awoke !  
My friend, it was a dream ; and all I saw,  
I heard, was nothing, save the linked maze  
Of sleep-engendered fantasies.

“ Not so ! ”

I cried, “ not so ! For who shall tell what He  
Hath left untold, or that *unreal*, judge,  
Which may, alone, be *real* :—that a dream  
Which seems all fact to us ; and what we hold  
Mere fancy, truth substantial ? Here we pause  
By our own imperfection cut short off  
From comprehension of his ways sublime,  
In which alone he walketh. Only this—  
That every thing which is of Him is good ;  
And that, of all the things which are, nothing  
Hath been without Him, or can be.”

Naught else

Was spoken ; but adown the road we went

With thoughts, it may be, not removed far  
From such as swelled the deep and speechless souls  
Of the disciples, going down the mount  
Of the Transfiguration ; musing, half  
In awe, in rapture half, the Great To Be,  
Hereafter, and the future state of man.

## E N V O Y .

My lay must needs end here.

A page is writ,

And but a single page of a vast tome,  
Whence pages of more profit shall be read,  
More worthy of the holy harp of time !  
O ! that some poet should arise on earth  
Commissioned to indite the Gospel theme  
In numbers, and to woo the erring ear  
Of sinful man, from the bewitching strains  
And melody of harps unsanctified.  
Messiah's reign is all unsung—unsung  
His yielding up the Mediatorial Throne  
To the Father ; and his intercession done !  
But all too great for uninspired bards  
Such theme, if even Milton's lyre of gold

Should wake to hymn it from the timeless sleep  
Of ages ; and unfit the field for mortal feet  
Of earth's best earthly minstrels.

But now, here,

My canticle is ended. It may be  
The earth-flowers I have gathered, through long  
years,  
Might earlier have perished, but for this  
Mine effort to embalm their sweets in verse.  
Would that the verse had worthier been ; the bard  
More fitted to the theme ; and yet, perchance,  
This may take root and live awhile on earth.  
And so, farewell, my harp, and farewell ye  
Who list my humble strains. And may the lay  
Not perish profitless, but, green and strong,  
Grow like the tree of life in Paradise,  
And offer shade and fruit of living thought  
To many a weary earthborn traveller,  
When the poor hand which wrote it shall be dust.

THE END.

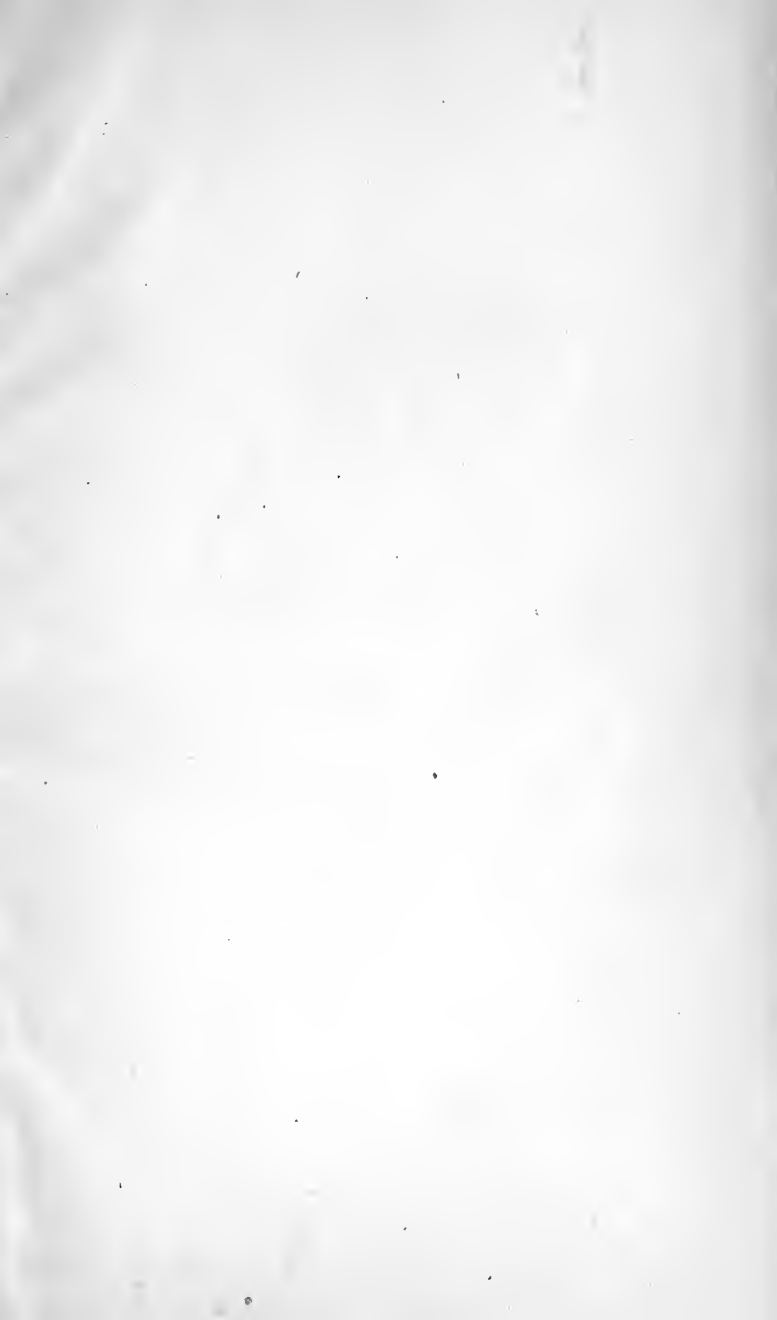
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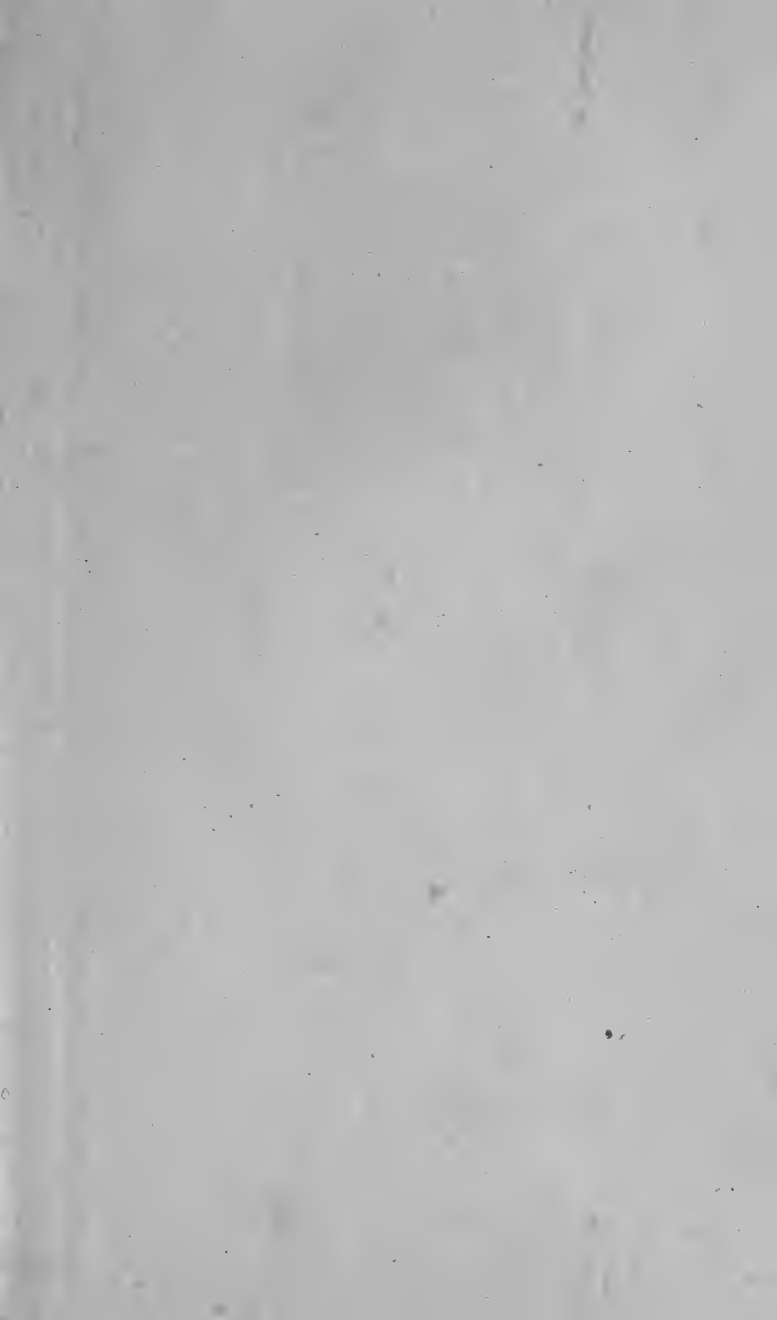












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